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The Editors: **Covert Action, Yes—Olliegarchy, No**

ROBERT B. REICH: CAN RUSSIA GO HIGH TECH? • RONALD RADOSH: MEANWHILE, IN NICARAGUA . . .

DAVID DENBY: OLLIE NORTH, THE MOVIE

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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JESSE'S NEW DEAL

Jackson plays for the white vote

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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CORRESPONDENCE

HODEL'S DAY IN THE SUN

To the editors:

It is said that everybody has his "day in the sun." Mine began when reports appeared that I had recommended that the answer to the world's ozone depletion problem was very simple: everyone should wear sunglasses and a sun hat ("Worse Than Watt," July 6). I found myself "burned" in virtually every newspaper and magazine, on nearly every network news show, and in some very funny cartoons. I would have been better able to enjoy the heat if this sudden fame were related to something I had said. I can claim no credit for the sunglasses and sun hats idea. Where such a ludicrous suggestion came from remains a mystery. The obvious answer is that we must continue to work with other nations and solve the very serious ozone problem. As for my day in the sun, it was an excruciatingly long and hot experience. I'm not sure I'd recommend it to anyone else.

DONALD PAUL HODEL
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D.C.

ETHNIC YUCKS

To the editors:

I don't think politicians should tell ethnic jokes, and I don't think there are any rules that can make them kosher ("Tell Me Another One," TRB, June 29). Though I must admit that I laugh at quite a few tasteless and often ethnically offensive jokes, there's no place in public life for any ethnic wisecracks. There's just too much real discrimination. When politicians use racist or sexist humor, they reinforce the notion that discrimination really is all right, and people just pretend that it isn't.

VICKI STEARN
New York, New York

To the editors:

This past fall and winter the Jewish American Princess jokes I was hearing on my trips to New York City three years ago emerged in Tulsa as Junior Leaguer jokes. The best ethnic joke tellers I've heard of late avoid race and nationalities altogether. Rather, the "target" of the joke is a group such as the Junior League or the Jaycees. The assumption is that Rotarians tell jokes about Exchange Club members and vice versa.

JOHN HAMILL
Tulsa, Oklahoma

JOURNALISTIC MALPRACTICE

To the editors:

"Calling Doctor Howard" (Notebook, June 29) was a gratuitous attack on all doctors. "Hallowed tradition" has nothing to do with the fact "that residents and interns work up to 36 hours straight." That is the lie used regrettably by the medical profession to justify sweating young doctors. The real reason for the long hours is cold economics. High-quality in-hospital care is very labor intensive—all patient areas have to be staffed 24 hours a day. The public in this country would not settle for less. But hospitals have limited budgets, especially the large teaching hospitals that usually provide care to inner-city populations. Hence doctors in training are overworked.

I recently completed four years of residency and fellowship during which I was often in the hospital working 120 hours per week. Those long hours didn't make me learn more. I would welcome any plan to restrict doctors' hours, but such a plan would increase the cost of health care and increase rather than decrease the doctor glut. U.S. medical schools don't graduate enough physicians to fill all available house staff positions, especially those of inner-city hospitals or hospitals in unpopular locations. Limiting interns' and residents' working hours would necessitate hiring more house staff, increasing the cost of medical care and exacerbating the "glut."

RANDY ROCKNEY, M.D.
Cumberland, Rhode Island

ZINGING THE YUPPIES

To the editors:

In an otherwise interesting account of the Marshall Plan ("Marshall Arts," June 15), Henry Fairlie takes potshots at this season's favorite target: the selfish, unidealistic American. He zings those horrible people who work in business and law: "The countless Americans who worked at home and abroad to make the Marshall Plan a success . . . would today be in law

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SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION
John McLaughlin fuels the fire while respected journalists Jack Germond, Morton Kondracke, and Robert Novak provide informative and often explosive opinions.
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THE NEW REPUBLIC
AUGUST 3, 1987

SAVING COVERT ACTION FROM OLLIE NORTH

In the national debate that followed revelations about CIA misbehavior in the mid-1970s, many people argued that democracy and covert action are fundamentally incompatible. Congress eventually decided otherwise, but passed a series of laws designed to assure that covert actions conducted ostensibly on behalf of the people of the United States should operate under at least some kind of democratic review and constraint.

The Iranamok scandal not only tests the effectiveness of those decade-old procedures. It also reopens the basic question of covert action in a democracy. Lt. Col. Oliver North, in his testimony, revealed himself to be in amazing agreement with covert action's left-wing critics that such activities inevitably lead to suspension of both democracy and the rule of law. Covert action inherently requires deception, North argued. Therefore it is permissible to lie to Congress. Therefore it is essential to destroy evidence being sought by criminal investigators.

The logical consequence of this sort of thinking was the plan cooked up by North and the late CIA director William Casey—never fully realized (or so we're told)—to turn the Iran-*contra* operation into a permanent floating covert operations agency, totally secret and totally outside all normal government channels. It is North's contention that such an agency—provided it operates without the use of appropriated funds—is not only legal but an absolute prerogative of the president under the Constitution. (Not, of course, that he's suggesting this particular president knew anything about such plans.)

This journal believes that in a dangerous world the United States must have the ability to operate secretly on occasion. We also believe, however, that the presidency is not an elected dictatorship, even in the area of foreign policy. (As Senator George Mitchell pointed out in reply to North's pious declaration that the president, too, is elected by the people: even the president cannot be held democratically accountable for policies that remain secret.) Our challenge, therefore, is to save covert actions from the likes of Colonel North.

The essence of covert action is secrecy, and secrecy requires deception. Lying isn't nice, but sometimes you must "weigh in the balance the difference between lives and lies," in North's characteristically poetical formulation. The key distinction, though, has to do with the purpose of deception. Lying to foreigners as part of operational skulduggery is fine. Secrecy to protect an operation from foreign counterattack is inevitable and tolerable. Lying and secrecy for the purpose of protecting an operation from democratic accountability are intolerable. These lines are sometimes easier to draw in theory than in practice, but not in this case.

It could not be clearer that the purpose of secrecy in Iranamok was to hide the operations, not from America's enemies, but from America's people and their elected representatives. The deception was anti-democratic in two ways. In the case of arming the *contras*, secrecy allowed the executive branch to carry out a policy that violated the will of Congress, as expressed in a law that the president had signed. In the case of selling arms to Iran, secrecy allowed the executive to violate its own expressed policy of not paying ransom to terrorists. If laws are passed and then secretly flouted, if politicians proclaim one policy and then secretly pursue its opposite, democracy cannot function.

Secrecy is precisely what makes hash of the administration's contention, so ardently advanced by North, that its *contra* policy did not violate the law, in this case the Boland amendment. The administration did not merely fail to inform Congress that the National Security Council was directing the *contra* war. It actually sent representatives up to the Hill to testify that (1) it understood that the law did apply to such activity and (2) it was obeying the law. In terms of democracy, it hardly matters whether the administration's purpose in this deception was to hide the fact that it was breaking the law, or to hide the fact that it was interpreting the law in a way clearly different from Congress's own understanding—thus preventing Congress from clarifying its intention. The result was that the wish of the people, as expressed through their elected representatives, was thwarted. At this journal we favor *contra* aid.

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But we also agree with Senator Warren Rudman that, in our democracy, "the American people have the constitutional right to be wrong."

In fact, the argument that the Boland amendment did not apply to the NSC is flimsy to the point of comedy. The law, in its most stringent form, barred assistance to the *contras* from "any agency or entity of the United States involved in intelligence activities." The NSC is not supposed to be involved in intelligence activities; it is supposed to be an advisory body to the president. As such it was not covered by Boland. Neither was the dining staff at the White House nor the people who mow the lawn. But if the cooks, gardeners, and NSC staff became U.S. agents operating in four continents, acting as intermediaries for U.S. intelligence, under orders from the head of the CIA, they would be an "agency of the United States involved in intelligence activities."

Nor is it relevant, as North emphasized in his testimony, that his adventures "didn't cost the American taxpayers one penny." The purpose of the Boland amendment was not to save money. Congress was using the appropriations mechanism to affect policy—as it has every right to do, within broad limits—and North's own salary was expenditure enough to trigger the law. Everyone understood this. Thus the secrecy.

When Colonel North was not claiming to have obeyed the law, he was blaming Congress for passing a law that was impossible to obey. "You are to blame because of the fickle, vacillating, unpredictable, on-again, off-again policy toward the Nicaraguan democratic resistance," he scolded. In fact, the changes in the Boland amendment from 1981 through 1986 were not "vacillating." They all moved in one logical direction: to stop U.S. support for the *contras*. Once again, the clarity of Congress's determination is precisely why the administration took its policy underground.

In 1982 Boland barred spending money "for the purpose

THE ZEITGEIST CHECKLIST

BY CHARLES PAUL FREUND

This Week		Last Week	Weeks on Chart
1.	A COLONEL OF TRUTH	1	31
2.	GOOD AND UGLY	—	1
3.	MAGNETIC RESISTANCE	*	6
4.	POTTED PALM	—	1
5.	THE GREAT WHITE HOPE	2	2
6.	PUBLIC RELATIONS	—	1
7.	FADE TO RED	*	4
8.	FEAR OF FLYING	—	1
9.	THE OLD BRAWLGAME	*	2
10.	HAPPY LANDINGS	—	1

1. A COLONEL OF TRUTH

Iranamok. North's rout of the committees is landmark TV. Radio listeners and those present reported very different first impressions about North than did TV-watchers. In the confrontational drama that developed, North, the lonely, misunderstood, but courageous victim, invited empathy. The results were a protective hero worship and a star-struck media that played shamelessly to it.

2. GOOD AND UGLY

The committees. Due to their numbers, the legislators had earlier failed to establish a public persona—an important contrast to all earlier TV hearings. Thanks to their initial mishandling of North, they developed one: mean-spirited hanging judges. They allowed the savvy North to seize from them the very role that other TV investigators had embraced: that of protecting the republic.

3. MAGNETIC RESISTANCE

Contras. North's week in the spotlight was obviously a bonanza for the flagging *contra* cause. First, it injected the missing ingredient into the debate: passion on the *contras'* behalf. Even better, North's side of the issue had the stage to itself. Committee members rarely dared to oppose North on this, and the media showed little inclination to undercut their star draw by examining any issues he raised.

4. POTTED PALM

Reagan. If the thesis is that North has helped Reagan by revitalizing the depressed Yeoman Right, and the antithesis that North hurt Reagan by not walking the plank for him, the synthesis is that Reagan appears more irrelevant than ever.

5. THE GREAT WHITE HOPE

Bork. The struggle over Bork is playing interestingly against the perceived ruin of the Reagan presidency. Bork has emerged not only as Reagan's last chance to influence social policy, but also as a contrast to Reagan's failure to turn social policy around through his years of leadership.

6. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Deaver. The Deaver trial will get plenty of ink, but it is no longer the story it was. Reagan's presidency once thrived on being anti-Washington, and Deaver's problems played against that carefully cultivated image. But with Reagan supine, his associates now appear the usual bunch of insiders. This diminishes Deaver's news value.

7. FADE TO RED

Network TV. The networks' labor problems are only the latest sign that their era is ending. They face an era of red ink, with estimates of audience loss ranging up to 20 percent. The situation promises only to worsen. The controversial new peoplemeters indicate even smaller audiences than did the old viewer diaries. The probable result will be a renegotiation of national ad rates. Somebody play the national anthem.

8. FEAR OF FLYING

Regulation. The line on U.S. air travel, its unreliability and its dangers, has become so negative that voices, including conservative voices, are now being heard for renewed regulation. Very much the same thing is happening at the FCC, particularly in regard to kidvid. Our short national daydream is over.

9. THE OLD BRAWLGAME

Baseball. Baseball is now doubling as roller derby. The lively ball (if that's what it is) has turned every hitter into Babe Ruth, with unhappy pitchers throwing the lively balls at the batters' heads. The frequent brawls that result raise two concerns: (*a*) players will be hurt; (*b*) hooligan fans, whose own rowdiness is a growing problem, will soon demand brawls.

10. HAPPY LANDINGS

Levitation. Not since Daniel Douglas Home wowed the 19th century by purportedly walking on ceilings have levitators enjoyed such attention. From Israel to Washington, meditators are assuming lotus positions and jumping about in hopes they will stay in the air. The more thoughtful of them expect to float off in five or ten years. The event will usher in a Golden Age.

*Item resurfaces in the Zeitgeist after at least one week's absence.

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of overthrowing the government of Nicaragua." The administration kept spending, insisting that this was not its purpose. A year later Congress closed this loophole and banned all military aid except for a compromise $24 million insisted upon by Republicans who argued that it was necessary to "wind the operation down."

A year later, after the mining of Nicaraguan harbors, Boland got even tougher. The records of the debate, despite recent attempts at misquoting, are unambiguous. The extreme anti-*contra* Harkin amendment—banning private contributions to the *contras* as well—was not rejected because Congress had suddenly gotten cold feet. It was abandoned precisely to avoid any constitutional shadow over the legality of the ban on government aid. As the chief Republican protagonist in the debate, Representative Kenneth Robinson, put it, "We in the minority on three occasions have attempted to fashion a workable compromise. I have no reason to believe that we would be any more successful this time than we have been in the past."

In 1986 Congress did change its mind and voted for military aid. That, presumably, is a flip-flop Colonel North does not object to.

The Church Committee, which investigated the CIA abuses more than a decade ago, concluded that four principles are necessary to ensure that covert actions are both effective and compatible with democracy. All four were violated in Iranamok.

First, covert activities should be consistent with the nation's overt policies. Does President Reagan think that trading arms for hostages is a good idea? North's testimony, for all his brave talk about "going *mano a mano*" with terrorists, eliminated any remaining doubt that paying ransom was the basic agenda. Reagan was happy enough to take credit for the release of Benjamin Weir and other hostages that resulted from these deals, if not for the seizure of more hostages that inevitably followed. Keeping covert action in line with overt principles is, among other things, a useful reality test.

The Nixon-Kissinger secret negotiations with China are frequently offered as an example of covert initiatives in conflict with overt policy. But these were mere preliminary negotiations. By the time they flowered into an actual policy, they were properly made public. Secret diplomatic feelers to those alleged moderates in Iran would have been legal, arguably even the president's constitutional prerogative. But the distinction between covert diplomacy and covert actions is not a difficult one.

The second principle is that the executive branch must have procedures of its own for orderly review of covert operations. This is to address the "rogue elephant" problem. The Tower report is a catalog of inadequate oversight, ad hoc decision-making, and the deliberate exclusion of relevant officials (such as the secretary of state) from key decisions in both the Iran and *contra* operations.

The third principle is that the president cannot have "deniability." Both this principle and principle No. 2 are served by the legal requirement of a presidential "finding" to precede covert actions. Such a "finding"—even if secret—ensures some degree of review and some acceptance of responsibility by the only elected official in the executive branch. (The vice president hardly counts.) In Iranamok, the finding requirement was treated casually to the point of negligence. Thus we have exactly the situation it was intended to prevent: lower-downs avoiding legal responsibility on the grounds that their actions were authorized; higher-ups avoiding democratic accountability on the grounds that they had no idea what was going on.

The fourth and most important principle is congressional review. Under the 1980 Intelligence Oversight Act, the president must inform only four legislators—the minority and majority leaders of the House and Senate, and the chairs of the Intelligence Committees—in advance of an action, and the entire Intelligence Committees "in timely fashion" afterward. In both the Iran and *contra* initiatives, the operations were deliberately concealed at all levels.

There is an inevitable danger, of course, that informing Congress will lead to leaks or threats of leaks that can stop the operation under review—not through democratic procedure, but through an effective one-person veto. Congress's record on leaks is not impeccable. (Nor, of course, is the executive's.) Senator Joe Biden has even bragged in these pages of stopping a covert operation by threatening to leak it. Well, nobody ever said democracy was perfect. We can only hope that democracy will reward those who abuse its privileges as they deserve. In the case of Iranamok, the essentials of the operation were known to a wide variety of generally disreputable private American citizens and foreigners. What led the administration to hide it from Congress was fear that Congress would act, not fear that it would leak.

Perhaps the procedures of accountability could use some tinkering, both to better protect secrecy and to better assure compliance. In the end, though, any procedure or legal requirement can be ignored by an administration determined to conduct a policy in the dark because it fears the policy could not survive exposure to the sunlight of democracy. We believe, as we've said, that democracy sometimes requires covert action. But democracy does not need defenders like Oliver North who love it better than they understand it.

Hollywood meets the Constitution.

OLLIE NORTH, THE MOVIE

AMERICA HAS JUST had a profound movie experience. A frightening one, too. The face that was gazed at, studied, and apparently loved, day after day—Oliver North's face—possessed the power and guile of an actor's instrument. A myth became flesh, and most people reacted as if they were still looking at a myth.

The signs of North's mastery of movie iconography were

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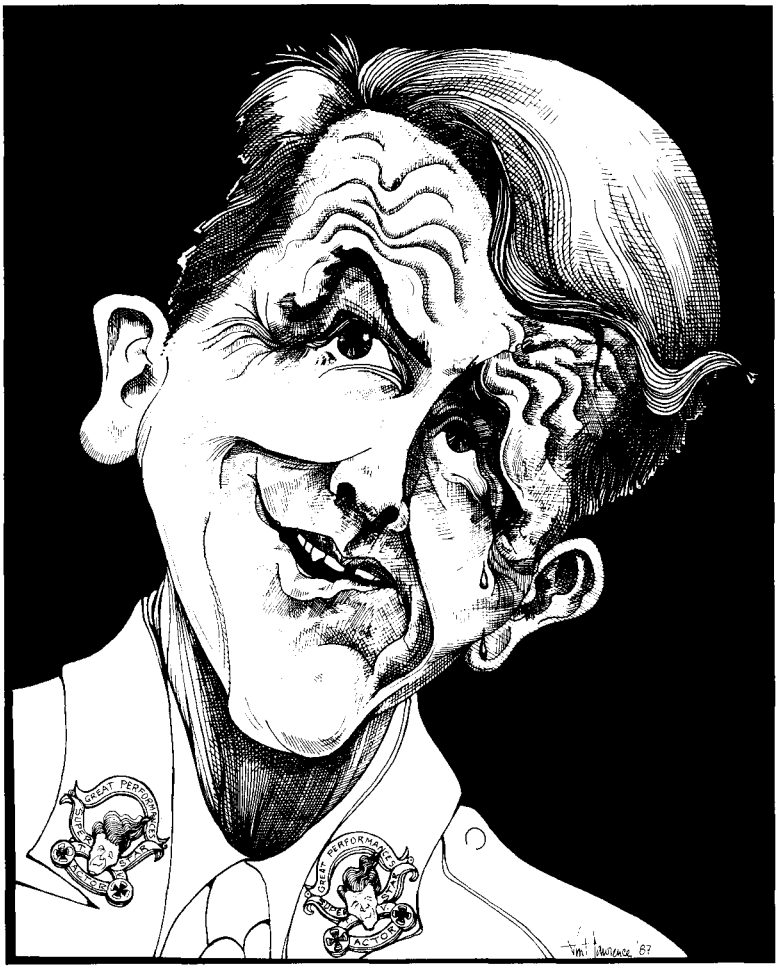
unmistakable. In the movies, a good actor's features and voice become a map of moral significance. The raising of an eyebrow is an opening to a soul, an emotional review of an entire life; the curve of a lip suggests a readiness for love or death. What the actor does in his roles becomes less important to audiences than their conviction that he is real when he is doing it. They know: they can read his face. In a few days Oliver North achieved that kind of belief, and the trust that comes with it.

How else to explain what North got away with at the Iran-*contra* hearings? He turned the event into an appreciation of his "sincerity." His admission of numerous illegal acts became proof of his commitment to what he believed in; the admission of innumerable lies became proof of his veracity. The paradoxes were dazzling. He gave people the glimpse of a deeply anti-democratic mind—the mind, say, of a young Argentine officer preparing a coup—and they saw a moral man. His audience was willing to follow him, as they followed James Cagney, through evil moments as well as good. He projected heroic sweetness and candor mixed with a stern adherence to duty. When he said that the hearing had brought disgrace on the country, no one replied that on the contrary it was his behavior that had brought the disgrace. No one dared straighten out his arrogant muddle. He was perceived to have an essence that remained incorruptible apart from his acts. He conveyed an aesthetic impression of rectitude that was assigned moral significance by an audience too lazy to work out the difference. The meaning of his conduct, and the point of the inquiry into it, got completely lost.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Mere handsomeness didn't do the trick. It never has. All truly successful faces are ambiguous, containing contradictory elements, touches of disharmony, waywardness, mystery, and rage. A face that expresses only one thing is understood too easily and judged as unequal to the complexity of the world. In a word, it is the face of the character actor rather than a leading man. North is not "straight from Central Casting." If he had looked and acted like a drill sergeant, he wouldn't have impressed anyone. But North possesses the kind of rich ambiguity that Gary Cooper had for three decades and Paul Newman has today. That is part of the reason he struck so many as credible and even heroic—even those who "disapprove" of his acts.

Look at the features again. The jawline is clean and strong, the chin not blatantly square but beautifully molded and thrusting. The mouth is handsome, its thin lips pressed together suggesting determination, resolve. The cheeks are grayed and slightly shiny from vigorous shaving of a strong beard (though the shadow stops at an attractive three o'clock). So far, all is manly, straightforward, earnest. But North's mouth, when it opens, reveals boyishly gapped teeth, a reminder of rogue escapades, pleasure in deception, and midnight trips to the airfield. The impression of roughneck joys is boosted by the ears, which, like Clark Gable's, stick out nicely—a bad boy's badge. And the hair is a masterpiece—short, but not too short, with a clear part (no Parris Island DI's brushcut here), and a slight but unmistakable cowlick—the child who once drank milk is still alive in the man. At the same time—no end of miracles!—North's hair is flecked with enough gray to suggest experience, judgment, maturity. The ambiguities are all in place.

If his appearance came from God and the Marine Corps, the use he made of it came from MGM. When he listens, he gazes directly at the speaker, blinking rarely, more serious than Joan Crawford; and when he speaks, he raises his face slightly, sometimes in yearning (as if to appeal to the gods of right reason whose demands *he* at least has always honored), but often in defiance, a lone hero surrounded by fools, cowards, and weaklings. His high-mindedness is unrelenting, a mortification to the rest of us. He may have moments of humor, but never of triviality. No matter how much we care about the state of the world, he cares more.

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His politeness, of course, is ironic, an obvious imitation of Clint Eastwood's joking mildness. At the hearing, his deferential tone honors the civics-class value of the congressman he addresses—the office but not the man. Husky but never guttural, his voice cracks with emotion at every mention of the bruised *contras* and then hardens again at those who would threaten to abandon them. Boyishness and fearlessness, ardor and experience, youth and tragic knowledge of the "dirty world"—all the mythic elements that a leading man must convey are there, all larger than life and impeccably displayed within clear "moral" coordinates. He is a complex man whom everyone can read.

The movie antecedents are not just Gary Cooper and Henry Fonda, but, more centrally, James Stewart. Especially Stewart the small-town idealist in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, the hick who almost falls victim to the capital's cynicism but triumphs in the end, his victory urged on and celebrated by a storm of telegrams. More than once, North was on the verge of dissolving into tears, as Stewart had, but valiantly he held back. John Wayne is there as well in the swaggering touches, the almost masochistic readiness to suffer, endure, die.

But most of all, North is a chip off the old block. The model is not so much Ronald Reagan the star of *Kings Row* as it is Reagan the President. The superbly timed catch in the voice, the mixture of truculence and maudlin self-pity; the anecdotal view of world politics; the habit of referring to himself, with rueful affection, in the third person, as if he too were a fan of Ollie North's, and one with a generous degree of tolerance for the hero's occasional lapses—it is Ronnie all over. Seeing himself as a hero, he experiences a high degree of indignation when others differ. What role does he play? Himself, of course. An American leading man always plays himself.

So Oliver North is "sincere." But why does that matter to anyone? Pathological liars, terrorists, and military dictators are sincere too. It's a measure of how thoroughly values in this country have become subsumed to media considerations that "sincerity"—i.e., how well someone plays himself—becomes an issue in the Iran-*contra* hearings. In this country, we no longer have a culture and a set of standards that we can draw on in times of trouble—a way, short of the law, of judging anything. There's no center, no core, just endless media images that are believed or not believed, and anyone who tries to see something for what it is risks sounding priggish, dull, and out of it.

IN THE Reagan period, all of this has been noticed often enough, but North's performance may have marked the first time that appearances ever hustled the *Constitution* off the stage. Faced with a star turn like North's, reporters and media personalities with a reputation for critical acumen either kept their mouths shut—as if, suddenly, their own opinions had become worthless—or jumped on the bandwagon, connoisseurs of the image-maker's success. The man was a hit, and that was all that mattered. This awe-struck manner before a box-office smash disgraced a proud profession. A myth was ready, the residue of 200 years of American bulling, American "archetypes," and 50 years of the movies, and a man stepped into it. Better get out of the way.

As Arthur Liman pointed out, Oliver North displayed contempt for democratic values while claiming to uphold democracy. But that unsavory paradox didn't seem to bother the public much—they may well have felt irritation at Liman for pointing it out. North is a classic authoritarian personality—charismatic, self-dramatizing, a dreamer who dreamed himself and was blessed with the physical equipment and the skill to act the role. When we look at his face we should feel not love but fear. Or rather: one thing to be frightened of is the love that the face inspires.

DAVID DENBY

David Denby is the film critic of *New York* magazine.

Even Cory couldn't fight fraud.

UNCLEAN ELECTIONS

IT'S NOT EASY to run a clean election in the Philippines. The legislative election of May 11, held under the new regime, is increasingly regarded as riddled with fraud. Paradoxically, such results were linked to Cory Aquino's unique reputation in Philippine political life. First, it was felt that under a Cory government the old elaborate procedures used to guard against fraudulent elections would be unnecessary—or even inappropriate. Second, Cory was led, by overconfidence, to try to elect an entire slate of 24 senatorial candidates.

Jaime Ferrer, her secretary for local government, told local officials that anyone whose district did not deliver a majority for the whole Aquino slate would be removed. And he has the power to replace all mayors and governors—who in the revolutionary government are called "OICs," or "officers-in-charge." Obviously, Ferrer could only have taken such a position because Cory was widely believed to be so popular that the pro-Aquino majorities could be transferred to whomever she backed. Losses could only be explained by local disloyalty—or at least incompetence. Ferrer did manage to tell the OICs that cheating was not an option.

But he obviously didn't tell them strongly enough. Reduced protection against cheating and the expectation of total victory everywhere (combined with the absolute power the revolutionary regime exercises over local officials) had one obvious result. It led to an uncoordinated, but cumulatively massive, set of illegal actions by government officials, all trying to protect their jobs by ensur-

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ing that the required majorities were obtained in their own areas.

The outcome was bizarre and embarrassing. Cory candidates received well over 100 percent of the votes cast in major regions, and hundreds of precincts reported zero votes for local leaders. Ninety percent of registered voters were assiduous enough to write in all 24 names. Nine weeks later the official returns by town and province still have not been released.

Presumably the opposition—extreme left, centrist, and right—also did its best to take advantage of the lack of protection against fraud. However, since people chosen by the administration run every local government unit throughout the country, it seems unlikely that the cheating was evenly divided. (The government has another special advantage because of the key role of teachers in the voting process. Shortly before the election the administration gave the teachers raises and bonuses, and took away their protection from being fired, thus doubly increasing their reliance on the OICs.)

Because Manila elite opinion has been lulled by confidence in Aquino's probity and popularity, it's taking a long time for the scale of the election fraud to sink in. For weeks the reports about massive irregularities were laid to Philippine politicians' "traditional unwillingness to admit defeat," or to efforts by "Marcos's loyalists" to undermine Aquino and bring back the old man—even when those charges were made by people who had supported Cory against Marcos.

BOTH THE LOCAL and international press as well as the U.S. Embassy largely missed the story for well over a month. But very gradually responsible opinion has started to change. By now there is fairly general recognition that the "defects" in the election were widespread. Vice President Salvador Laurel has said that normal safeguards for the opposition need to be restored in the next election. Cory commented merely that the fraud in the May 11 election was "not worse" than in elections under Marcos. But that's some record to beat. The question now is whether willingness to face facts will continue to increase until the Manila elites recognize that somehow the first election under the new Aquino constitution turned out to be a fiasco.

Today the belief in Cory is still so strong in many quarters that if she quickly ordered new elections with proper safeguards, she could probably get away without finding and punishing the members of her government who perpetrated the frauds. It doesn't look as if she's going to do either. At the moment she seems more likely to continue to insist on the validity of the elections. The result could be the kind of escalating crisis with which Americans are only too familiar.

MAX SINGER

Max Singer, who was in Manila shortly after the election, is president of the Potomac Organization, his Washington consulting firm.

How the plan will harm U.S. interests.

REFLAGGING FOLLY

THE ADMINISTRATION'S plan to flag Kuwaiti ships and reinforce the American military presence in the Persian Gulf has the markings of another major foreign policy blunder. Its immediate motive, to reassure Saudi Arabia and other Arab Gulf countries in the aftermath of the Iran-*contra* fiasco, was misconceived. Its execution has become mixed with reflex reactions to Soviet moves. The result is a self-defeating new policy in place of an old one that worked.

The first mistake was in overestimating what the United States owed to the Saudis (a practice not restricted to this administration). When the Iran caper became public, it was assumed that the Saudis were rattled by the inconsistency of U.S. policy and thought that we had to somehow restore their confidence in us. Coincidentally, the Kuwaitis revived an invitation for the United States and the Soviets jointly to protect their shipping in the Gulf. The Soviets said yes and the administration said no, but offered instead to go one step further. The ambitious reflagging initiative was set in motion.

Actually, the Saudis were not upset about America's Iranian move, though they may have been appalled by its fumbling execution. They are, after all, past masters of the diplomacy of multiple tracks and hedging bets, and have themselves tried for many years to maintain an opening to Iran even as they have supported Iraq with money. Nevertheless, since Americans volunteered to depict them as profoundly aggrieved, they went along with the notion and tried to cash in on it. They wanted arms. The United States refused, inviting them instead to support an initiative that is of dubious value to their interests. At best, the reflagging could undermine their quiet efforts to appease Iran and undercut their role as leader of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) by giving undue prominence to Kuwait. At worst, it risks embroiling them in the middle of an escalating conflict between the United States and Iran.

The initiative has since been justified on loftier grounds. These are: (1) protecting essential access to Gulf oil; (2) promoting an end of the Gulf war; and (3) checking the extension of Soviet influence in the region. In all three areas, reflagging is likely to be counterproductive.

Access to oil means uninterrupted flow at bearable prices, and is indeed a vital objective. Never mind that our allies depend much more on access than the United States does, and that they ought to share in the additional burden of protecting it. The point is that the renewed threat to oil supplies posed by the Iran-Iraq war is largely a myth. Indeed, the seven years since the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war have been "fat" years for access compared with the previous seven "lean" years. There have been no shocks

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like those of 1973 and 1979, each of which multiplied oil prices threefold or more.

The belligerents' attacks on each other's oil and the occasional attacks on third-party traffic since 1980 have not affected the global supply, and have not even prevented an oil glut that has forced oil prices to a fraction of what they were at the war's outset. Two factors have been critical to that favorable outcome. One is the greed of OPEC producers, which forced prices to levels that compelled structural conservation measures, encouraged exploration and production in non-OPEC countries, and stimulated the development of alternative energy sources. The other has been effective American measures to protect access since the fall of the Shah and the outbreak of hostilities in the Gulf.

The question is not whether force is needed to protect shipping. It is. The deployment of strong American naval and air power just outside the Gulf has imposed a salutary restraint on Iran's interference with third-party shipping. Much as the Iranians resented the vast financial support given to Iraq by the GCC countries, they have refrained from forcefully striking back at them for fear of the American response. They were afraid that the United States might blow their naval and air forces out of the Gulf waters and skies, and go on to impose a devastating blockade on traffic to and from their country. They have confined themselves to occasional attacks on those countries' shipping, partly to preserve their own revolutionary bravura and partly to give those countries an excuse to restrain their aid to Iraq. Kuwait came in for more punishment because it helped Iraq more extensively than the others, and because the Iranians thought that due to its non-aligned policy, the United States was less likely to come to its rescue.

The real questions are whether the new initiative is merited now, and whether increasing the stakes could undermine the effectiveness of our previous posture. Paradoxically, it could take the heat off the Iranians by advancing a comparatively limited measure—far less than their worst fears—while exposing the disagreements between the United States and its allies and disarray within its government.

HELPING TO END the war, the second objective cited, is as noble as motherhood, but it is not clear how the proposed policy will do so. Flagging Kuwaiti tankers and reinforcing the Gulf squadron is an invitation for Iran to devise nasty countermeasures short of provoking an all-out American response, such as the imposition of a blockade. One thing is virtually certain: five years after expelling Iraqis from Iranian soil and in the middle of a bloody jihad, revolutionary Iran will not be simply intimidated, Qaddafi-like. Indeed, Iran may well choose to intensify attempts to destabilize Kuwait and other GCC countries through suicide commando raids, terrorism, and subversion. It may increase its attacks against non-flagged Kuwaiti or other ships in order to demonstrate the futility of the American moves and embroil the administration with Congress. It may even attack American or American-flagged ships, be ready to absorb an American retaliation, and come back with further attacks, in the expectation that Congress and public opinion would not support a prolonged conflict and loss of American lives. If we have not learned the lessons of Vietnam and Lebanon, the Iranians have.

In any case, there are clearer and more defensible ways of moving toward a cease-fire. If someone wants to help end the war by tilting toward Iraq, let him say so, defend the proposition, and propose the appropriate means. Trying to back into that position through the proposed measures is a prescription for dissension at home and possible disaster abroad. In the meantime, the present policy is more likely to harm Iraq than to help. The deployment of large American naval and air forces, crowded in the narrow Gulf, and the hair-trigger rules of engagement issued to them would probably hamper the Iraqis' attacks on Iranian oil shipping and thus allow Iran to export more oil to finance its war. Moreover, how long would we—and the Soviets—be able to maintain that we are in the Gulf to protect the internationally recognized right of free navigation while turning a blind eye toward Iraq's attacks on Iranian shipping? Securing everybody's right would work much more in Iran's favor, since Iraq exports the bulk of its oil through pipelines.

FINALLY, checking the extension of Soviet influence into the Gulf is a perfectly valid strategic objective, but the proposed policy is apt to help rather than hinder the Soviets. Their recent proposals to protect the Gulf are largely bluff: they don't have the resources in the region to carry them out. This was clearly shown in their failure to react to the two Iranian attacks against their ships last month. If we were to stay with our established posture, the Soviets' protection would soon be seen as the broken reed it is. This, coupled with the pressure from GCC countries, which have been unhappy about the Kuwaiti move, and even with domestic Kuwaiti opposition, could well compel the Kuwaiti government to rescind its invitation to the Soviets. On the other hand, by going in ourselves, we would make Kuwait's move acceptable and thus legitimize the Soviet role. Worse still, we would be assuming the main burden of protecting, while the Soviets would garner part of the credit as co-protectors at little cost to themselves.

Despite the imminent start of the reflagging policy, there is still time to reconsider or to allow the tensions generated to metamorphose into a U.N. Security Council resolution on a cease-fire and free navigation, with threats of collective sanctions. For once the United States has had a policy for the Gulf situation that works. Why not leave well enough alone?

NADAV SAFRAN

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The truth about Hispanic poverty.

THE NEXT UNDERCLASS?

ARE HISPANICS, the fastest growing minority in the country, heading the way of the black underclass? Raul Yzaguirre, president of the National Council of La Raza, warned in an interview that a permanent Hispanic underclass was developing in this country. Numerous scholars, journalists, and Hispanic leaders have been saying much the same thing in recent months. Their predictions are misleading.

The statistics do seem to demonstrate that Hispanics are a population at risk. Compared with the general population, they are poorer, less educated, more likely to be unemployed, to be on welfare, and to bear children out of wedlock. According to the last census, the average education of adult Hispanics (10.8 years) is lower than that of non-Hispanic whites (12.5 years) and blacks (12 years). The median family income for Hispanics in 1984 was $18,833, compared with $26,433 for the general population, and unemployment among Hispanics is 50 percent higher. More than a quarter of Hispanic babies are born to unmarried women, and nearly a quarter of all Hispanic households are headed by women. Among non-Hispanic whites, only 11 percent of babies are born to single mothers, and women head households in only 11 percent of families.

But the picture is not as grim as these statistics suggest. Hispanics are among the most heterogeneous of ethnic groups, a fact that even Hispanic leaders choose to ignore, for political purposes. There is, after all, strength in numbers. And important differences exist among subgroups. Mexican-Americans are the largest of these, with 60 percent of the total Hispanic population. Puerto Ricans living in the continental United States are 15 percent of the total, and Cubans six percent. The rest include people with roots in Central and South America and Spain.

When you break down the statistics by subgroup, a different picture emerges. Cubans show only marginally different characteristics from the general population. What differences there are can be attributed largely to the unique circumstances of the Cubans' arrival as political refugees in the 1960s. For example, they are older and, upon arrival, were less educated than the general population. Many, however, have continued their education, and their children are better educated than those of the native-born non-Hispanic population. Though their income lags behind the national average, Cubans earn more the longer they reside in the United States, and the gap is smaller in the second generation.

Puerto Ricans, on the other hand, show alarming signs that they already constitute part of a Hispanic underclass. Some 44 percent of Puerto Rican families are headed by women. Fifty-one percent of births among Puerto Ricans occur outside marriage. Their unemployment rate is nearly double the national average, and the percentage living in poverty is four times greater. Statistically, Puerto Ricans are indistinguishable from blacks.

Mexican-Americans, the largest group, fall somewhere between Cubans and Puerto Ricans. Their median family income ($19,184) is closer to that of Cubans ($22,587) than to that of Puerto Ricans ($12,371). In percentage of families headed by females, Mexican-Americans (19 percent) again fall much closer to the Cuban model (16 percent) than the Puerto Rican model (44 percent). Twenty-four percent of Mexican-American births are out of wedlock; for Cubans the figure is 16 percent; and for Puerto Ricans, 50 percent. But Mexican-Americans' unemployment rate of 11.9 percent more nearly resembles the 14.3 percent rate among Puerto Ricans than the Cubans' 6.8 percent rate.

In only one index do Mexican-Americans fare worse than Puerto Ricans: education. The median years of education for all adult Mexican-Americans in 1985 was 10.2, compared with 11.2 for Puerto Ricans and 12 for Cubans. But these statistics are affected by the large numbers of recent Mexican immigrants who received their schooling before coming to the United States. More than a third of all Mexican-Americans are immigrants and, more than most immigrant groups, Mexicans suffer from very low education levels when they arrive. In one study, 62 percent of Mexican immigrants were found to have a primary school education or less.

THE IMPORTANT question here is: Which end of the spectrum will Mexican-Americans gravitate toward? There are good reasons for optimism. Most Mexican-Americans either immigrated or descend from people who immigrated quite recently. Between 1951 and 1978, 1.26 million legal immigrants entered the United States from Mexico, compared with only 814,000 between 1881 and 1950. Illegal immigration may actually double the figure for more recent immigrants. Most legal immigrants from Mexico are unskilled or semiskilled urban workers. They tend to get jobs in the service and construction sectors, more often as laborers than as craftsmen. Although these jobs pay wages much higher than in Mexico, they do not bring earnings up to the median level for the total population. But as with virtually all immigrant groups, earnings disparities between Mexican immigrants and native-born Americans narrow over the years. After 15 years, Mexican immigrants compensate for their initial handicaps and surpass U.S.-born Mexican-Americans in earnings, though they still do not earn as much as non-Hispanic whites.

Mexican immigrants have yet to match the achievement of Cubans. But Cuban immigrants were better educated than Mexicans by about three additional years, and were assisted in their adaptation to American life by refugee centers, which provided emergency welfare aid. Even more important was the development of a Cuban enclave in southern Florida that provided job opportunities for new arrivals and opportunity for advancement into managerial

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positions that helped prepare Cuban immigrants for their entrepreneurial efforts.

But things are likely to get better for Mexican-Americans, not worse. And as Mexican-Americans go, so goes the bulk of the Hispanic population. The worries of Hispanic leaders and social activists aside, there is no convincing evidence that Hispanics are about to become the next underclass. To the contrary, the large numbers of immigrants who make up nearly one-half of the total Hispanic population bring with them the qualities that have characterized the American spirit from the beginning of this nation.

Immigrants are a special breed of people. They are risk-takers, motivated by a desire to change their lives. Economic opportunity beckons them to the United States. They come here hoping to build a better life not just for themselves, but for their children. Every indication is that Hispanic immigrants are doing just that. A study of Cuban and Mexican immigrants showed that 40 percent owned their own homes after only nine years' residency. In this way they resemble previous generations of immigrants, poor in the first generation, and largely middle-class in succeeding generations. Only Puerto Ricans stand in contrast to the achievements of other groups of Spanish origin. Rather than predicting doom for the Hispanic population as whole, leaders and scholars should invest more energy in finding out why this group is doing so poorly.

LINDA CHAVEZ

Linda Chavez was director of public liaison in the Reagan White House.

The revival of the Russian right.

GLASNOST'S GHOSTS

Moscow

The historical-patriotic association Pamyat is holding a meeting at the Artist Association on Crimea embankment. There is standing room only in the big hall, even though the event ("What Moscow means to us"—a lecture with color slides) was announced by word-of-mouth only. Dimitri Vasiliev, introduced as a well-known patriot, a photographer and writer by profession, has been talking for two hours. He is an experienced speaker, fluent, self-confident. His speech is taped, and copies will be sent to like-minded patriots in various parts of the country.

The proceedings so far seem almost unexceptionable. The first part of the speech is devoted to the urgent need to save the Russian cultural heritage: in particular the many historical buildings, churches, and other monuments that are being destroyed to make room for ugly new streets. Vasiliev affirms his undying attachment to the Party, its secretary general, and to *perestroika* (Gorbachev's "restructuring"), which prompts enthusiastic applause. He does, though, frequently refer to certain sinister forces ("lost souls") who are apparently behind the systematic destruction of the cultural values and the monuments: "You understand to whom I refer," the speaker says meaningfully every few minutes, and the public nods knowingly.

The "lost souls" are finally specified:

> Comrades, if you look up the full catalog of the personal library of the great Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, you will find that the leader of the international proletariat and the founder of our state had not fewer than three copies of a book called *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. . . . I shall tell you what this book reveals: a satanic conspiracy of Freemasons and Zionists is afoot to destroy our sacred country, its culture, all that is dear to us. . . . Unless we unite and smash these evil forces now—for there is very little time left—it will be the end of our people and our fatherland.

Vasiliev then describes how Moscow and the other old Russian cities were systematically destroyed in the 1920s by the Zionists Trotsky and Kaganovitch and their Masonic architects, and how they built the famous Moscow underground railway in order to blow up one day the capital by means of a series of giant explosions.

> Do you know that sinister forces are rebuilding our holy capital in such a way that the main streets will constitute a Star of David? Do you know that the satanic forces want to make Russia a nation of alcoholics? But no one ever told you of the Judeo-Masonic plot to prepare our children for a life of debauchery. For the yogurt they are given every day contains not less than 1½ percent of alcohol. Do you know that on Chaska street, where once a church stood, they are now building a so-called "grill bar"? I don't know exactly what "grill" means. But I am certain that sooner or later our women and our daughters will be employed there as prostitutes—by whom and for whom, do I have to spell it out?

By now the crowd is very agitated, and after Vasiliev concludes his talk, people are slow to disperse. An elderly colonel in full uniform with some two dozen decorations shouts that action should be taken here and now. Someone calls him a provocateur. A younger man loudly demands that the old churches should be made into houses of worship to Perun, the old pagan god of the Russians. For Jesus Christ was, after all, also born a Zionist. A woman preaches caution: "You know, you have many sympathizers in the Party and the government. . . . Why spoil a good cause by exaggerated rhetoric? Be careful." She quotes an old Russian proverb: "The quieter you are, the further you'll go."

PAMYAT (literally translated as "memory") was founded some years ago by several employees of the Ministry of Aircraft Production. These were apparently genuine enthusiasts who devoted some of their free time to restoring neglected churches, graveyards, and other monuments. Gradually, though, the leadership changed and the circle became something akin to a slightly camouflaged political

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movement. Whether the leaders and most of the members of Pamyat still deeply care about the poetry of Essenin and the fate of old monuments (most of which are not all that ancient) is a matter of some doubt. On a few occasions they invited medievalists and archaeologists to speak, among them the leading experts in the land. But their speeches were interrupted and the orators shouted down. Yegor Likhachev, aged 80 and the most respected figure in the field, is dismissed by the leaders of Pamyat as a Zionist.

How to explain the growing success of Pamyat? Soviet newspapers have compared Pamyat to the Black Hundred—the most reactionary group in early 20th-century Russia; others have drawn parallels with the Nazi movement. Yet Pamyat members have been received by Boris Eltsin, the Moscow Party boss, and, on the whole, they have been accorded extraordinary kid glove treatment. Their meetings have not been banned; on the contrary, meeting places have been provided by state and even Party organizations—allegedly on the basis of misleading information. Still, it is unlikely that the authorities would have been equally tolerant about a meeting discussing, say, the historical role of the Mensheviks—not to mention Leon Trotsky.

Perhaps they were ignored because they were considered unimportant? Perhaps Pamyat was thought to be a group of misguided patriots, basically loyal to the Party, who can be restored to the right path? But Pamyat has consistently attacked the Party and state bureaucracy, a monster almost as horrible as the Zionists and the Masons. They have denounced Alexander Yakovlev, who became a member of the Politburo recently, because he uttered some warnings 15 years ago against national prejudices and the tendency to glorify certain reactionary figures from the past. Pamyat professes to love Gorbachev, but bitterly attacks the evil forces surrounding him—including the "arch Zionist Georgi Arbatov," Gorbachev's chief adviser on U.S.-Soviet relations—who are writing his speeches.

PAMYAT APPARENTLY has some sympathizers in the Party leadership. The political education department of the army is reported to be sympathetic; they want a generation of recruits imbued with healthy patriotism. (This kind of patriotism, as one of them said, is not taught in the American-style discotheques mushrooming all over the Soviet Union.) Others higher up are echoing this theme. Despite the recent decline in official anti-Semitic propaganda, some significant establishment figures have been echoing Pamyat's line. Yuri Bondarev is one of the best-known contemporary Soviet writers, a president of the Russian Writers' Union and the recipient of innumerable state awards. A young officer in World War II, he is also the author of several powerful novels about the war and the late Stalin period—notably *Tishina* (Silence). Yet in his last novel, *Igra* (The Game), his hero gives vent to extreme and splenetic views about American illiteracy, about America as "one big moral and intellectual concentration camp," America as the "main agent of the corruption of the soul and the big lie."

Pamyat, with all its lunacies, is further supported by a resilient strand in Russian thought—paranoiac xenophobia and a belief in all-pervasive conspiracies. The old idea that the world is ganging up against Russia, first formulated by the Slavophiles and Dostoyevsky, is undergoing a strong revival. At the last meeting of the Writers' Union in March, Bondarev described the times as similar to those in July 1941 with the Russian forces in retreat after the blows of the "civilized Barbarians" and the "pseudo-democrats."

Bondarev's grotesque association of the Nazis and Jews is not exceptional. The arguments at the Pamyat meetings—that Eichmann was a leader of the Jewish people, and Hitler a tool of Freemasons and Zionists—can be found in a slightly more refined form in many books published in Moscow and Leningrad over the last 15 years. The authors of these books are today the honored guests of Pamyat.

IDEOLOGICALLY, contemporary Russia is a vacuum. Lip service is paid to official doctrine, yet few believe in it anymore. It would be desirable if this vacuum were filled by a more liberal, enlightened spirit of freedom, tolerance, and a general democratic revival. There are, of course, people who stand for these ideals, but in a country without democratic traditions they are not many. The appearance of Pamyat is just one of several reactionary manifestations of a strange mood that was suppressed until the era of *glasnost*. There have been reports of juvenile gangs proudly displaying the swastika in the streets, of young people applauding whenever Hitler appears in Soviet movies, of Afghanistan veterans organizing themselves as vigilante groups—with slogans to match. All this after decades of preaching "proletarian internationalism."

It has been obvious since the 1930s that the old official doctrine is gradually being replaced by Russian patriotism. It is equally obvious that Pamyat is not a synonym for Russian patriotism. The quasi-religious revival in Russia, the new interest in the past and in old village culture, the fact that some of the *derevenshiki* (the village writers) are among the most talented and powerful authors in Russia—perhaps in any language—need hardly be a matter of disquiet. In fact, those belonging to these groups should not find it difficult to find a common language with cultural conservatives in the West. The problem with Russia—as with Germany—is that conservatism has rarely been allied with moderation.

Pamyat is clearly beyond the pale, but how far is its influence likely to grow? Self-interest, if nothing else, will almost certainly dictate to Gorbachev his course of action. The propagation of Great Russian chauvinism in a multinational empire in which Russians barely constitute half of the population is an invitation for disaster.

WALTER LAQUEUR

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Jackson's play for the mainstream Democratic vote.

JESSE GOES COUNTRY

BY FRED BARNES

THE QUESTION sounded innocent enough. During a breakfast with reporters at Washington's Sheraton Carlton Hotel on June 5, Jesse Jackson was asked: Public opinion polls show that Europeans have far more confidence in Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev as a peacemaker than they do in President Reagan—does he share their view?

Jackson didn't hesitate. Neglecting Gorbachev, he went after Reagan. The president's foreign policy has "failed." He has made "dangerous moves." He has tolerated apartheid in South Africa too long, and has "sent frightening signals to people in Europe." People "sense" far more activity on behalf of arms control from Gorbachev. And Reagan's policy of aiding the *contra* rebels in Nicaragua is "illegal and unnecessary."

Suddenly Jackson caught himself and began pulling back from his one-sided assault on Reagan. "I don't have much confidence in either of them," he said. Still, "one senses a serious initiative from [Gorbachev's] side on arms reduction. On the other hand, President Reagan has started on arms reduction rather late." Jackson seemed unsure how much further to retreat. "I sleep under Mr. Reagan every night," he said, straining now. A trace of anxiety was visible on his face. Finally he blurted, "I obviously have more confidence in Mr. Reagan. I've slept under Mr. Reagan for seven years—uneasy. I wouldn't want to sleep under Mr. Gorbachev for one night."

Any other candidate for the 1988 Democratic presidential nomination would have found that question a snap: Reagan's no day at the beach, but he beats Gorbachev. For Jackson, the question caused a tense and awkward episode. His instinct to zero in on Reagan was at war with his political savvy, which told him he'd better not come off as Gorbo's shill.

Jackson's split personality is tormenting his new bid for the presidency. Both his ideological inclinations, which are generally hard left, and his public style, which is invariably histrionic and confrontational, are perfectly suited for a protest candidacy. In 1984 Jackson was satisfied to be a protest candidate, stressing racial issues and locking up the black vote. He never competed seriously for the nomination. This time he wants to do exactly that by attracting hordes of white voters. If muting his ideology and toning down his style will help, he's willing to try. The trouble is, posing as a conventional candidate isn't easy for Jackson.

Sometimes he can pull it off. At a Washington roast of Senator Bill Bradley on June 23, Jackson stole the show. On the way to the podium, he snatched up a huge sign that designated the table of supporters of Senator Joseph Biden, a rival in the presidential race. Biden has been Jackson's nemesis since the senator declared in early June that he would never choose Jackson as his vice presidential running mate. Jackson was affronted. Anyway, he playfully waved the sign, and referred humorously in his remarks to "Vice President Biden." Jackson also had the funniest zingers about Bradley. He joked that Bradley overcame great odds—white skin, an upper-middle-class background—to become a basketball star. As a child Bradley used to chant, "I AM SOMEBODY." Bradley "represents the Uncle Tom's Cabin of our day." When Jackson finished, he gave Bradley a black power handshake.

Issues weren't discussed at the roast. When they come up, as they did at the Democratic presidential debate in Houston on July 1 moderated by William F. Buckley Jr., Jackson stiffens. He is keen on increasing what he calls "the comfort level" of whites with his candidacy, and as a result his answers in the debate were dry and bland. Jackson is an effective rabble-rouser. When he tries to be responsible and programmatic, he's boring.

The opening question—Whose picture would you take down from the Oval Office and whose would you put up?—had been given to the candidates beforehand. Jackson played it straight, and was miffed that the other candidates didn't. He said he'd take down Herbert Hoover's, and he incorrectly blamed Hoover for "the famous Palmer raids violating basic human rights." The Palmer raids occurred in 1919, a decade before Hoover became president. In a stab at sounding mainstream, Jackson said he would put Lyndon B. Johnson's picture up. The rest of Jackson's responses were snippets from his speeches. The only spark came at the end when, alone among the candidates, he rose to deliver his conclusion. But he spoke too long, touching on a laundry list of issues, and Buckley had to cut him off.

A week later Jackson addressed the NAACP at its annual convention in New York. He gave two speeches, back to back, each 20 minutes long. He explained to me later that there are two agendas in his campaign, one substantive, one inspirational. The two don't mix well. Jackson said they are like hot and cold running water, which is one of his all-purpose analogies. "When it first hits, it's volatile. The more it goes down the stream, the temperature evens out."

At the NAACP, the substantive speech seemed to be for whites and the press, the inspirational one for the predominantly black audience. The first he read methodically from a prepared text. It was tedious, except when he took a

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JESSE SPEAKS

"My distinguishing characteristic is that I have survived."—*Washington Post*, March 14, 1976.

"You understand that I've always developed a tension—a tension in my own mind about the place I'm assigned to and the place I deserve to be. That's why I resist the press calling me a black leader. I'm a *moral* leader who just happens to be black."—*Washington Post*, March 14, 1976.

"I used to love wearing diamond pinkie rings, you know. But there was this contradiction. Here we were fighting exploitation in South Africa, and there I was wearing diamonds."—*Washington Post*, March 14, 1976.

"I think we've got two choices in South Africa—either disarm the white South Africans or arm the black ones. That's only fair. How can we say in the Middle East that we've got three friends, and we give arms to one friend but don't give any to two other friends?"—A Conversation with the Rev. Jesse Jackson, American Enterprise Institute, 1978.

"If we can impose an embargo on Cuba because Castro ran a lot of gangsters out of there and reorganized the economy, we can use the same kind of strength, if our sincerity is commensurate, in South Africa."—A Conversation with the Rev. Jesse Jackson, American Enterprise Institute, 1978.

"I don't pretend to be an expert on foreign policy. I have some opinions based upon such information as I am privy to. I start from the premise that it is totally unrealistic to ask people who are desperate for survival to be too choosy about who their help comes from."—A Conversation with the Rev. Jesse Jackson, American Enterprise Institute, 1978.

"The two major targets of a Russian attack would be against our military bases and installations and our major metropolitan centers—both of which are occupied in disproportionate numbers by black people."—explaining why blacks should support the SALT II treaty, *Washington Post*, May 29, 1979.

"Apartheid is worse than Hitler. Hitler was a man for a season. Once he was exposed, he was rejected. But apartheid is a system of legal extermination . . . with social acceptance and protection and cooperation with the great powers of the world."—*Washington Post*, July 29, 1979.

"We're the first to die in a hot war, and we're the first to suffer unemployment in a cold war."—discussing black concern about the Middle East, *Washington Post*, August 21, 1979.

"Once we began to move up, the Jews who were willing to share decency were not willing to share power."—*Washington Post*, August 21, 1979.

"Asking them [the PLO] simply to denounce armed resistance is to humiliate them and neither side should be subject to humiliation in this transition from war to peace."—*Washington Post*, October 1, 1979.

"By October 1, there will be no black leader left willing to come to the aid of the Palestinian cause, if there is not an immediate infusion of funds into the black community from Arab states. We will all learn to recite the alphabet without three letters, P-L-O."—quoted in the *Washington Post*, October 11, 1979.

"I'm not an economist. . . . We are trying to create the climate that will focus attention on the need to improve the economy. It's not up to us to draft the specific programs to do it."—*Washington Post*, April 15, 1980.

"I believe that blacks who protest are being singled out for cruel and unusual punishment. It's an attempt to intimidate those who have views different from the administration's present posture. I believe that we're singled out on a political hit list."—*Washington Post*, March 14, 1981.

"America was built on five economic and social pillars. After it cleared the Native Americans away through terroristic genocide, enslaved blacks as the first major American industry, annexed Hispanics against their will, the foundation of the five pillars was laid. These five pillars were: (1) cheap labor, (2) cheap energy, (3) cheap raw materials, (4) an exploited labor market divided on the ideology of race or skin worship, and (5) expensive exports. Each of these pillars is now crumbling, the nation's foundation is shaking, and the people are in a state of panic."—presidential address, Operation PUSH, Chicago, 1981.

"Reaganomics uses economic programs that mainly benefit whites—CETA, welfare, food stamps, public education, minimum wage, legal services—and puts a black face on them. Many whites believed the perception and voted against their own economic self-interest, biting on the race bait. They soon shall wake up to the reality of their own economic nightmare. Born in meanness and bred in madness, what was designed to be an act of genocide quickly will become an act of suicide."—presidential address, Operation PUSH, Chicago, 1981.

"Willpower—the resistance syndrome on the part of the slave—is the greatest threat to the master. Dependence and fear are the slave's greatest enemies. The master must kill the slaves' will through intimidation, violence, and diversion by making them impotent with alcohol, drugs, obligation through debt, or through deceit, destroying their credibility among their neighbors and neutralizing their allies."—presidential address, Operation PUSH, Chicago, 1981.

"We want ownership, we want our share, we want investments. Cut us in or count us out."—*Washington Post*, January 9, 1982.

"I'm a Third World person. I grew up in an occupied zone [Greenville, South Carolina] and had to negotiate with the superpower, really the colonial power."—*National Review*, March 9, 1984.

". . . The state of Israel is not the state of Judaism. Zionism is not a religion, it's a political philosophy. Many Zionists are, in fact, agnostics and atheists. Judaism is built upon faith and forgiveness and is really an optimistic view of the future, and Zionism tends to be much more narrow than that. . . . I believe Jews have a right to be Zionist politically, but one need not equate Judaism and Zionism."—explaining his statement that Zionism is a "poisonous weed," *Playboy*, June 1984.

"I cannot separate the Nicaraguan revolution from the tyranny of [former dictator] Somoza and our investment in his

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tyranny. We should recognize Nicaragua, we should open up dialogue with its leaders, we should stop supporting the rebels militarily, because we're losing prestige. . . . We ought to be more patient with Third World nations in their transitions for development."—*Playboy*, June 1984.

"Well the fact is, the Israelis are holding people under occupation and annexing territory and engaging in expansion, building settlements in violation of the law. At some point, that has to give way to a more democratic relationship with neighbors."—*Playboy*, June 1984.

"Much of the media and the party leadership have tried to isolate me and the issues I have raised. They have tried to dismiss my campaign as a campaign for black people only."—*National Review*, June 29, 1984

"We should not be mining the harbors of Nicaragua and trying to covertly overthrow that government. Military aid and military advisers (who will give military advice) should be withdrawn from El Salvador. . . . We should not be establishing military bases in Honduras and militarizing the nation of Costa Rica. It was wrong for our nation to invade tiny Grenada."—speech, Democratic National Convention, 1984.

"If, in addition to our numbers, if our leadership had cashed in our political IOUs and challenged the white liberals who benefited from us, women, and Hispanics, we could have won the entire process."—on the 1984 campaign, *Ebony*, August 1984.

"You see, before, historically, we did not spiritually unify blacks of different ideological persuasions. . . . This time we've involved the nationalists, whether it's Herb Daughtery or Farrakhan."—*Ebony*, August 1984.

"I have the option of making money in Hollywood, the option of making commercials. I could probably be one of the highest paid circuit riders on the speaking circuit, if that was my interest. I could be an international lobbyist. So I'm doing what I'm doing by choice. And some people in their cynicism cannot imagine the amount of sacrifice involved."—*Ebony*, August 1984.

"I tried to get Andy [Andrew Young] and Maynard [Jackson] to run [for president]. I think any of us could have been the instrument after we had aroused the public. And nobody would run. I finally did it, but my basic position is that the empowering process must not get sidetracked by personal career questions."—*Ebony*, August 1984.

"The approach of no-talk policies, preemptive strikes, starvation, and asphyxiation through trade embargoes, superpower intimidation through threats and money-market manipulation must give way to the most basic link in civilization—communication."—speech, West Berlin, May 8, 1985.

"We seek to reorganize the relationship [with Japan] or we will organize to end the relationship."—demanding more Japanese dealings with minority-owned American businesses, *Washington Post*, December 10, 1986.

"There's a broad body of people in this country across lines of race, religion, region, and sex who desperately want that new direction within this country and new connections with other people and forms of government in the world."—interview with *Marxism Today*, a publication of the British Communist Party, March 1986.

"Is it right to support Afghan rebels and not support the ANC [African National Congress] or SWAPO [Nambian] rebels? If it is right to support one, it is logically right to support both."—*Marxism Today*, March 1986.

"If you can talk with Gorbachev, and if you can go to China, why can't you talk with Castro?"—*Marxism Today*, March 1986.

"Our organizing a national campaign to overthrow [Daniel] Ortega is immoral and the worst thing that could happen is if we are successful. Cuba is central to peace in Central America, and a key to the Contadora process, because Castro is seen as the David who survived Goliath. He is the cult hero of that part of the world."—*Marxism Today*, March 1986.

"We'll pull together SANE and Freeze, the Non-Intervention in Central America and Free South Africa peace activists, and the Asians fighting Asian bashing."—speech, National Press Club, June 19, 1987.

"Is it them Taiwanese taking our jobs? Is it them Asians you got to watch? . . . I mean the No. 1 exporter from Taiwan is GE (General Electric). Now why'd they choose Japan over the American worker? Is it because we're inadequate, drink beer, and watch ball games? No, no, it's because workers here demand liberal wages and job security and the workers in Taiwan are living in dormitories as opposed to single-family dwellings, because they cannot organize unions. They can't strike. They [transnationals] allow slave labor to undercut organized labor and then put TV commericals on that say, 'Buy American.' They'll have you fight the Asian people and then when they [Asians] begin to demand the right to vote and the right to make a decision, they'll put you in a uniform and say, 'Go and shoot them.' That's what is a patriot. Friends that's a mistake. We need better leadership than that."—speech, National Press Club, June 19, 1987.

"I would be willing to go to South [Central] America and negotiate a peace accord, and I can do it. I've done it before without the resources of the White House. I've met with Castro, Ortega, and Duarte, and I have a clear sense of the region. We can get all foreign presence out of the region as well as our own out."—speech, National Press Club, June 19, 1987.

"Back to what we were talking about you digging around in my personal life. No white reporter tells it all and neither should you. It is crucial that you understand this. For example, one American president died in bed with his girlfriend—a heart attack. That wasn't revealed until many years later. There are personal things about John Kennedy or Bobby Kennedy that we won't know until the year 2000 or later. Remember what happened to that black female *Tribune* reporter who busted up our organization? Her drive to gain the world was so strong that she did not know what it meant to lose her soul. You just don't tell it all."—quoted in *Jesse Jackson, The Man, The Movement, The Myth* by Barbara Reynolds (Nelson-Hall, 1975).

"Long live Cuba. Long live Fidel Castro. Long live Che Guevara!"—Havana, June 1984.

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few shots at Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork, and pandered to a voting bloc by saying a Hispanic should be nominated in Bork's place. He drew few cheers. When the text ended, Jackson turned inspirational. He preached. "You're giants. Drop this grasshopper complex." He suggested that innocent black politicians—he mentioned, among others, Mayor Andrew Young of Atlanta, Mayor Marion Barry of Washington, and Georgia legislator Julian Bond—are being targeted by racist prosecutors and white reporters. "It's spreading like political AIDS across the country," he said. The crowd loved every word.

Therein lies the problem of style and substance for Jackson. It's a problem even with his ideology tamed. When he talks up a five-point program for this or that, his charisma vanishes. When he rants in Southern preacher fashion, he stirs only those who already back him, blacks. Three hours after his NAACP speech, Jackson spoke to the New York chapter of Americans for Democratic Action and the New Democratic Coalition. The audience of 300 people was three-quarters white. He spoke passionately and substantively. Afterward he pleaded for funds. "We need right-now money," he said. He asked those willing to pledge $1,000 to stand. A dozen people did, all blacks. More blacks stood to pledge $500 and $250. No whites got up until Jackson got down to $100 and $50. Jackson's style had overpowered his substance.

FOR NOW, the Jackson campaign has two overriding challenges. He has the threshold task of persuading voters that he isn't a fringe candidate and can actually win the nomination. And he must reach far beyond his political base in the black community and attract white and Hispanic support. Both are difficult, but Jackson starts from a considerably stronger position than he did in 1984. Back then he announced late, and faced a formidable front-runner, Walter Mondale, who had already gathered the support of many black leaders. Now he's running early in a wide-open race in which none of the six white candidates appears to have great appeal to blacks. His base, 15 percent to 20 percent of the Democratic primary vote, is secure. And black leaders are more receptive. In 1984 NAACP president Benjamin Hooks was dead set against Jackson's running. When Jackson appeared at the NAACP convention in July, Hooks embraced him enthusiastically.

But can Jackson win? In his speeches, he dwells on 1984 numbers, noting that he got 3.5 million votes in the primaries, while Mondale got 6.7 million. Then in the general election Mondale got 10.6 million black votes. In other words, Mondale got "four million more [black votes] than the whole nation gave him" in the primaries. Jackson argues that these 10.6 million, or at least a large percentage of them, are his in the 1988 primaries. His conclusion: "We have the numbers." In truth, this recitation proves nothing more than that black voters, like white voters, turn out in greater number for a general election. Just because they vote in the fall doesn't mean they'll vote in the winter and spring. If they didn't in 1984, when the Jackson campaign became a civil rights crusade in the black community, why would they in 1988? Jackson has no answer.

Nor does he for the analysis of Thomas Cavanagh, an expert on black politics at the National Academy of Sciences. In a 1985 monograph, Cavanagh said racial antipathy against a black candidate has ebbed but hardly vanished. In a Gallup Poll, only 16 percent of the electorate said they opposed a black candidate and seven percent expressed no opinion, though Cavanagh said these were merely "embarrassed to admit their prejudice to a pollster." The result is a 23 percent handicap for a black presidential candidate, leaving 77 percent of the electorate from which to build a coalition. To win a majority in the general election, a black must attract 65 percent of the non-racist part of the electorate. This may not mean that a black can't win, though Cavanagh thinks that is the case. But it does put Jackson at a severe disadvantage.

The group that is least convinced about Jackson's ability to win is black mayors. Coleman Young of Detroit, Richard Arrington of Birmingham, Young of Atlanta, Lottie Shackleford of Little Rock, Harvey Gantt of Charlotte—none is for Jackson. Black mayors are "more willing to go on record saying they're not for Jackson," explained Linda Williams, an analyst for the Joint Center for Political Studies. "This is pragmatism. They want the candidate who can win. They want federal aid flowing to their cities again." But they don't think Jackson will ever be in a position to provide it.

He disagrees. Maybe he's dreaming, but he believes he can win the nomination and the presidency. "The basic difference between now and 1984 is his eyes-on-the-prize strategy," said Ann Lewis, who was national director of Americans for Democratic Action until she stepped down on July 10. With advice from Lewis, among others, Jackson has whittled off some of his rougher edges and fashioned a populist pitch aimed at drawing working-class whites into a coalition with blacks. He no longer stresses racial issues, unless addressing a black group. Even then, he dwells on populist economic themes.

JACKSON'S WHIPPING boy is the multinational corporation, a safe enough target for a Democrat. He blames it for every economic trouble: unemployment, farm foreclosures, trade deficit, budget deficit. Cavanagh said Jackson has emerged as "a Michael Harrington social democrat." In the speech he read to the NAACP, Jackson said that "too many Americans have a simplistic theory" about economic dislocation. "It is the result of the evil machinations of the Japanese, or the Mexicans, the West Germans, or the South Koreans. Sometimes this conspiracy theory gets dangerously nationalistic, or even racist." In the ADA speech, Jackson recalled the "guy in Chicago [who] lost his job and shot a Toyota six times—autocide."

Jackson argued that "our jobs are not being taken by South Koreans and Taiwanese. They are being taken to South Korea and Taiwan by U.S. companies with tax incentives." In both countries, "slave labor" flourishes. His evidence is that wages are lower and workers "repressed" in these countries, strong unions are not allowed, and health and safety standards in the workplace are poor. This gives

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these countries a "structural" advantage in economic competition. American workers are as good as ever, according to Jackson. It's simply that the "playing field" is tilted against them.

At every opportunity, Jackson insists he is not a protectionist. He denounces the Gephardt amendment as "veiled protectionism. We should not be misled by proposals that will not protect the worker, the consumer, or reduce the trade imbalance significantly, could lead to a trade war which would hurt workers even more, and possibly trigger a worldwide recession or depression." Yet he favors legislation that would "make the repression of workers' rights an unfair trade practice." This would have the same effect as the Gephardt amendment, blocking imports from Taiwan and South Korea and many more countries. "American multinationals would not be able to hire repressed labor abroad and fire free labor at home," he told the NAACP.

He would go further. "Capital does not follow conscience," he told me. "It follows incentives, and sometimes constraints." Multinationals such as General Electric and General Motors now "have a double incentive to leave our economy. They get the tax incentive here to go and the [foreign] government provides incentives at that end—the repressed labor and so on." Jackson would change the tax code to punish companies that shift jobs overseas. If that failed, he would block them by fiat. I asked Jackson if this wouldn't make these companies less competitive. "They may be less competitive with each other on this playing field," he said, "but we've got to change the playing field." One of his schemes for doing that involves "enforceable international laws against global union-busting, racism, sexism, and sweatshops. By incentives, constraints, or both, multinational labor exportation and exploitation must end." Don't hold your breath.

JACKSON HAS a second plan for promoting "the four R's"—research, reinvestment, retraining, and reindustrialization—that involves dipping into the $2 trillion held by pension funds. "This is a massive pool of capital which is being used ineffectively for the workers whose money it is." If workers or union leaders or elected officials direct the investments by their pension funds, "we can act to rebuild America," Jackson told the U.S. Conference of Mayors on June 15. The money—$100 billion or $200 billion—would be guaranteed by the federal government and put in an American Investment Bank. This institution would use the money to finance "affordable housing," energy-efficient transit, infrastructure and "job creation." According to Jackson, the federal taxpayer wouldn't have to foot any of the bill.

Taxpayers should be so lucky. The investments to which Jackson would devote pension fund resources are risky and probably unprofitable. Since they lack private funding, they've already failed the market test. New housing would be partly for the homeless, who won't be able to pay for it. Mass transit is a profitable enterprise practically nowhere. Infrastructure is public. Who would pay for it? The answer is the taxpayers. Jackson may have worthy projects in mind. But when pension fund managers ask for their money back with a reasonable rate of return, the taxpayers would have to step in, since they'd guaranteed the money.

For all the flaws in his proposals, Jackson's brand of populism has a potentially large constituency in the Democratic Party. Some of his rhetoric is classic. Gains by working people haven't come with help from "a rich banker, a senator, a Harvard-trained lawyer, or a yachtsman." And "corporate reform" has a nice ring to it. His agricultural program has an even more direct appeal to farmers. "Ranchers and farmers have fed America and the world," he told the Louisiana legislature on May 15. "They deserve mercy, a moratorium, a restructuring of their debt, supply management, parity, and markets. Farmers don't want a handout, they want a helping hand." Of course what Jackson described is a lavish handout to a politically important special interest group.

Jackson's populist message is aimed at the voting bloc least likely to support him at the polls, working-class whites. On top of their racial antipathy, they're likely to balk at his foreign policy views, even softened versions of them. Todd Domke, a Republican political consultant, says Jackson needs to make these views come across as "anti-establishment rather than anti-American." But Jackson hasn't managed this. In a speech at West Point last February 19, a speech cited by Jackson aides as a fair expression of his national security policy, he talked only about weapons systems he would cut and defense obligations he might jettison. "I would rather stand with you than cower behind Star Wars," he said. "New solutions" are needed, but he offered none. This approach may appeal to another Democratic bloc, yuppies, but not to working-class whites. But Jackson stands little chance of getting the vote of yuppies. They don't like his economic populism.

In his stump speeches, Jackson wisely skirts foreign policy. But in Q-and-A's with audiences, interviews, and debates, his Third World attitudes bubble up. Jackson had a perfect opportunity to make political points after his visit to Cuba in 1984. All he had to do was criticize Castro for the repression and economic stagnation his dictatorship has caused. He would have gotten credit for bringing back political prisoners from Castro's jails, while also tweaking Castro's nose. Instead he acted like a Castro groupie.

When Buckley raised in the Houston debate Jackson's having bellowed in Havana in 1984, "Long Live Fidel Castro," Jackson said he hoped Castro will "change his ways." But he took umbrage at the criticism of Castro by three other presidential candidates, Senators Albert Gore and Paul Simon and Representative Richard Gephardt. "Gephardt has never met Castro," Jackson huffed later. And he complained personally to Simon for having said he didn't like Castro while never having met him. Jackson blames the Reagan administration, not Castro, for the bad relationship between the United States and Cuba. "A window was open there. This administration is just so blinded by ideology, it seems." I asked Jackson if Castro's terrible human rights record didn't daunt him. He responded that Cuba was no

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worse off than this country was 30 years after the revolution, when blacks were slaves and women couldn't vote.

Nor is Jackson willing to temper his criticism of Reagan for the bombing of Libya last year. At the founding convention of his Rainbow Coalition in April 1986, he condemned the administration's "eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth approach. . . . We are bombing ourselves into a corner." When I interviewed him on July 9, Jackson quibbled with Reagan's justification for the bombing raid. The raid was in response to a disco bombing in Berlin. Jackson said there is no proof that a radio message was sent from Tripoli to Libyans in East Germany ordering them to bomb the disco. "When all the dust settled, it was never determined that that was the cause of the bombing," said Jackson. Even if this were true, it's not a point that will make Jackson attractive to white working stiffs.

The irony of Jackson's candidacy is that the white voting bloc traditionally most sympathetic to black office-seekers is all but off-limits to him: Jews. Jackson has toned down his views on the Middle East. He advocates a Palestinian "homeland" instead of a "state." He never mentions PLO leader Yasir Arafat, once his ally. "He's not saying anything this year that hasn't been said on the floor of the Knesset [Israeli parliament], and not necessarily by the left wing of the Labor Party," said Ann Lewis.

But Jackson can bring himself only so far. He would be more acceptable to Jewish voters if he renounced Black Muslim Louis Farrakhan. He won't. He said on the "Donahue" show on May 28 that he dealt with the Farrakhan issue adequately in 1984. "That issue is not a factor in our campaign," he said. Likewise, Jewish opposition might ease if Jackson suppressed his anti-Israel sentiments. But last October he signed a magazine ad demanding that Reagan bar Israel's new military attaché to the United States, Gen. Amos Yaron. The ad falsely accused Israeli troops of aiding the massacre of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon in 1982. Sometimes, hard as he tries, Jackson can't keep a strongly held opinion down.

Tracey Longo helped in the research of this article.

The Sandinistas' growing totalitarianism.

NICARAGUA REVISITED

BY RONALD RADOSH

IN 1983, when I first visited Nicaragua, it belied the descriptions both of those who saw it as an all-powerful Stalinist state and of those who characterized it as a popular national experiment in independence and social change. The state still bore some elements of true pluralism: a functioning opposition press, relatively free political parties, and a strong if beleaguered free trade union movement. But the revolution had become increasingly militarized and polarized, and there was a clear movement toward a Cuban-style regime. (See "Darkening Nicaragua," TNR, October 24, 1983.) I recently returned to Nicaragua. Today there are few signs of pluralism, and government repression has become fierce and pervasive.

The nation appears to be on the verge of economic collapse. The official exchange rate, 70 cordobas to one dollar, is ignored by the government itself, which trades dollars at the rate of 4,200 cordobas to a dollar. The black market fetches between 7,500 and 8,000. The wage of a top-paid Nicaraguan executive amounts to $18 a month. Benjamin Linder, the American recently killed for his service as an *internacionalista*, received $20, one of the highest wages in the nation. The average laborer receives from three to ten dollars a month. The bare supermarket shelves testify to what Nicaraguans can buy with those funds. Locally produced eggs, butter, and milk are no longer available, and there are long lines for the monthly ration of the few state-subsidized goods such as butter, milk, rice, and sugar.

Critics of the *contra* war blame these conditions on the United States, which they say forces the government to spend most of its income on waging the *contra* war. Yet the war alone can't explain Nicaragua's economic problems. The Planning Ministry, MICOIN, has allowed grain to rot in warehouses. Sugar, produced in a region untouched by fighting, was once a major export and staple. Production has plummeted to less than three-quarters of what it was in 1978. In 1977, according to one opposition leader, the country produced 300,000 *manzanas* of cotton. In 1987 they were producing only 85,000 *manzanas*.

The Sandinista *nomenklatura* aren't much affected by any of this. The government hard currency store has grown into an air-conditioned shopping mall three city blocks long. Originally it was open only to FSLN leaders, diplomats, and Westerners, but now any Nicaraguan who purchases an admission card for ten dollars a year can shop there. The sum is beyond the means of most people. That leaves the few remaining members of the old bour-

Ronald Radosh just returned from a fact-finding mission in Nicaragua sponsored by the Puebla Institute.

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geoisie, who work for foreign-owned firms and get paid in dollars, or who have accumulated wealth. Smaller businessmen in the cities use the store to purchase essentials unavailable elsewhere. One can buy VCRs, auto tires, Fisher-Price toys, Pampers (a box that costs $11 in the United States sells for $32), Kellogg's cereals, Hershey bars, hot dogs, and ice cream. The electronic cash register rings up the amount in dollars.

NOMINALLY, Nicaragua has a legal and functional democratic opposition. Grouped together in the Coordinadora, or Democratic Coordinating Committee, the opposition ran candidates for parliament and for president in 1984. The elections produced a 96-seat parliament, in which the FSLN holds 61 seats, the Conservatives 14, the Liberals nine, the Social Christians six, and the various Communist parties two each. The appearance is that of a vigorous, free democracy.

The reality is quite different. In 1983 each party could still publish its own internal newsletter. The Conservatives had a monthly paper, *La Marcha*, which routinely issued strong attacks against the government. The last time they were allowed to publish anything, Conservative leader Miriam Arguello said, was in 1985, immediately before the new state of emergency.

In 1987 such a publication would be confiscated and its publishers imprisoned. Violeta Chamorro said she tried to publish an illegal one-page issue of *La Prensa* during the recent meeting of the World Inter-Parliamentary Union. Armed militiamen from State Security (who had heard about the publication from a story on the Voice of America) raided *La Prensa*'s offices and, brandishing automatic weapons, held the staff under house arrest, destroying all but a few copies. Meanwhile, a ban on the weekly paper of the opposition Communists, *Avance*, has been rescinded. The two main articles in the June 3 number describe the political uses of anti-communism, and how the Soviet Union has helped Afghanistan from the 1920s to the present.

Although the parties cannot function politically, their leaders are allowed to hold press conferences for the benefit of the foreign media. On June 9, in anticipation of the forthcoming meeting in Guatemala of the Arias group, the Coordinadora presented their peace proposals in Managua. They argued that the Arias plan, Costa Rican president Oscar Arias's proposal for a simultaneous cease-fire and initiation of dialogue, is too pro-Sandinista. It asks the United States immediately to stop aid to the *contras*, it does not require that the Nicaraguan government negotiate with their leaders, and it would allow the Sandinistas to continue receiving Soviet and Cuban aid for a few months. Some opposition members believe that the *contras*' military muscle has preserved a small amount of political space, and they worry that the plan would further consolidate the power of the FSLN. To make the Arias plan meaningful, they want in addition: truly free elections, a suspension of all military aid to Nicaragua by foreign governments, and the withdrawal of the foreign *internacionalistas* who help the Sandinistas.

When I last talked to Virgilio Godoy, the head of the Independent Liberal Party (PLI), he was minister of labor, trying to mediate between the militant unions and the FSLN. Sandinista economic policies kept interfering with his efforts, and he finally resigned. Godoy chose at first to enter the presidential race in 1984, but pulled out when it became clear the electoral process was rigged.

The FSLN often points to Godoy and his associates as living proof of the regime's toleration of pluralism. Godoy sees it differently. As his associate Guillermo Selva put it: "In Madrid the Sandinistas are social democrats, in Moscow they are Marxist-Leninists, in Peru they are APRISTAs, in Argentina they are Radicals, and in the United States they are good liberals." In reality, Selva argues, the Sandinistas are totalitarians, anxious to move their country to a formal Marxist-Leninist state as quickly as possible. He produced a list of over 300 names of the PLI's cadre, all of whom are in jail on trumped-up charges.

UNDER THE state of emergency, party activists who are suspected of being a threat to the state can be incarcerated indefinitely and held without trial. Many of those arrested have no recourse to due process of law, and some have already languished in jail for over two years without any formal charges having been brought. The most common charge is that of cooperation with the *contras*, a catchall used to implicate any potential political opponent. In Jinotega, a PLI stronghold, one man was sentenced for selling a horse to the *contras* after his farm was surrounded by 300 troops.

Selva described a PLI rally in late May in Ocotal province. The PLI was told by State Security to cancel the event. They refused, and when Godoy and Selva arrived they found that the militia had closed the road, claiming that *contra* activity made it impossible for them to proceed. Two hours later they were allowed to pass. When the leaders arrived they found 4,000 people waiting to hear their speeches. The local PLI activists told them that State Security had come to their headquarters, warning them against handing out circulars for the event and urging that it be called off. "The people are so fed up," Selva said, "that all fear on their part has disappeared." That evening the security forces rounded up PLI activists who had worked for the event and threw them all in prison. They will eventually be brought before the notorious People's Tribunals. The next morning children of the activists received draft notices.

The FSLN also retaliates against the citizenry for *contra* attacks. In late May, Selva says, the rebels attacked a Sandinista military headquarters in San Rafael, 20 miles north of Jinotega. Twenty Sandinista militia were killed and ten others wounded. The military immediately gave orders to round up all neighbors from surrounding small villages. Troops were sent and the villagers were given a choice: wear uniforms and fight, or be arrested.

As a result of the *contra* war, the government is forcing families out of their homes, particularly in Nueva Guinea.

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According to Lino Hernandez, the head of the independent Permanent Commission on Human Rights (CPDH), about 8,000 individuals were moved in 1983 and '84, and so far this year alone 160,000 have been moved. The government calls the camps to which they are moved cooperatives, but many are forced encampments where people live in primitive conditions. State Security and militia are there to "educate" them in Sandinista principles, and to provide arms for "defense" of their co-ops. Scores try to escape.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS situation has deteriorated badly. In 1983 unionists were harassed and arrested for organizing strikes. Carlos Huembes, head of the CTN (Confederation of Nicaraguan Workers), once the most powerful union in Nicaragua, was beaten by the *turbas*, the government's organized goon squads, when he returned to Nicaragua from a foreign visit. But the CTN was allowed to hold a convention, and to condemn publicly the government in union publications.

In 1987, because of a declining work force and the effort to coerce laborers into joining the official Sandinista trade union, CTN's ranks have declined. Its members face arrest, persecution, and torture. When their behavior is considered out of line, they are subject to "re-educational programs," and put in La Chiquita—classic punishment cells—until they relent. The government no longer uses the *turbas*. Instead, Huembes said, State Security regularly visits dissenters at their homes, threatens breadwinners with incarceration, and warns of sudden danger to their children if they persist in their anti-government activities.

At the offices of the CPDH, scores of people begged to tell us their cases. They told of false and arbitrary arrest, lack of due process, prisoners railroaded by Popular Tribunals, and torture during interrogation as a mechanism to force confession. Recently a group was formed called The January 22 Movement of Mothers of Political Prisoners, which seeks to lobby for amnesty for political detainees, as well as better treatment for existing prisoners. The Nicaraguan government appears determined to prevent the organization from growing. Hernandez noted that State Security both threatened imprisonment of the members and of their remaining free relatives if they persist, and promised food and jobs if they cooperate with the government.

In the prisons the FSLN has instituted forced labor and activists are tortured. Roque Soris, a member of the Social Christian Party, was arrested, beaten, and told to become an informer within the organization. With a pistol held to his head, Soris agreed to their demands. One member of the mothers' movement said that her 17-year-old son was taken to jail and killed, and that the police announced he had been killed during fighting. Medical examination showed he had boot marks of military men who had stomped on his chest, and that his legs were broken. Her other son was arrested, and a few months later the State Security came for her.

The Catholic Church remains a powerful force, and perhaps the single most popular Nicaraguan is the revered Cardinal Obando y Bravo. Although he has consistently resisted political activism since he was appointed cardinal, Obando y Bravo has become the symbol of opposition to the Sandinistas' Marxist program, and the Sandinistas have been engaged in a tough campaign to discredit him. The Sandinistas' attempt to establish the so-called Popular Church, committed to the blending of Catholicism and Marxism along liberation theology lines, has largely failed to draw the allegiance of the Nicaraguan poor. The evident weakening of FSLN hegemony made the government decide to attempt to win over the Church. The Church and the FSLN have been engaged in the past year in secret negotiations—as part of the national dialogue that the Sandinistas pledged to hold after the 1984 elections. While I was there I discovered the substance of the positions of both sides.

THE FSLN MADE several conditions for calling a halt to its campaign against Obando y Bravo. The Church must condemn the policies of the Reagan administration and renounce the *contra* war. And it must not protest the laws of the nation. Finally, the government wants a veto over bishops appointed by the Church, a demand that one Catholic priest likened to "Spanish colonialism, which the Sandinistas like." The FSLN, in other words, wants the Church to become in effect an official version of the Sandinista People's Church.

Church negotiators, for their part, demand that the government accept their right to conduct pastoral work, that it strive to make peace with its enemies, and that it denounce all violations of human rights. Most important, the Church demands that the government enter into a dialogue with all Nicaraguans, to achieve a national reconciliation. The Church also admonishes the government to respect the Church's right to have free access to the means of communication, and asks that Radio Católica be immediately reopened. Finally, it asks that the government allow the return to Nicaragua of banished priests. The government has responded that talk about these issues is a closed matter. With that proviso, the dialogue is at an impasse.

In the FSLN's 1979 "Document of the 72 Hours," the leading party members came out with a statement of their future strategy. "With the Catholic and evangelical Church," the FSLN said, "we should foster relations . . . observing a careful policy that seeks how to neutralize, as far as possible, the conservative stands and how to increase the links with priests open to the revolution, at the same time that we promote the revolutionary sectors of the Church. With the Protestant Church . . . we should implement a restrictive policy, developing intelligence surveillance on them, and if they are caught off guard, expel them at once." The Sandinistas have acted in accordance with this strategy, yet to this day their supporters reiterate as gospel a statement once attributed to Comandante Jaime Wheelock, "Look at what we do, not at what we say." As time passes, the FSLN's performance matches precisely their previously ignored but openly stated ideological program. □

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Gary Bauer, the New Right voice in the White House.

THE MOUSE THAT ROARS

BY JOHN B. JUDIS

IN PRESIDENT REAGAN'S first term, the administration bitterly disappointed New Right conservatives who had wanted it to lead a national crusade for school prayer and against abortion. But now that the administration has exhausted its economic initiatives, it is beginning to spotlight social and moral issues. The change in focus has also meant a change in personnel. David Stockman, Richard Darman, and James Baker were once the point men for the administration's domestic agenda. Now it is 41-year-old Gary Bauer, a diminutive Midwesterner with an upturned nose and thin lips that curve into a sardonic smile.

In the 1980 Reagan campaign Bauer was a buck private in the army of conservatism. "He was a nice guy who did things like getting people a cup of coffee," one prominent campaign official recalled. "If anybody had said this fellow would someday be a Cabinet officer, everybody would have thought he was crazy." But seven years later Bauer has become one of the administration's principal spokesmen on domestic policy. Along with Kenneth Cribb, the assistant to the president for domestic affairs, Bauer has become the man that conservatives look to in the White House. "Bauer is very important to the administration," says Burton Pines, the vice president of the Heritage Foundation. "He very much symbolizes the right, the advance troops of the New Right."

Bauer chaired the administration's task force on the family and wrote its controversial report that appeared last November. The report, which Senator Daniel P. Moynihan labeled "less a policy statement than a tantrum," represented the most concerted presentation of New Right socioeconomic doctrine to appear under the White House imprimatur. Bauer blamed the "social experiments" of the '60s and the "easy availability of welfare" for abortion, divorce, illegitimacy, and poverty.

In January Bauer took the initiative in challenging Surgeon General C. Everett Koop's leadership in combating AIDS. He took umbrage at Koop recommending condoms. Bauer sent a memorandum to the Department of Health and Human Services calling on the department to "teach that children should not have sex." After Bauer was appointed head of the president's Office of Policy Development on January 31, he urged the president to set up a special commission on AIDS and to initiate mandatory testing. Bauer has now become the White House spokesman and policy guide on the full range of social issues, from AIDS to child poverty.

Bauer has risen through the ranks on the strength of his ability to articulate conservative ideas and his considerable nerve. Quiet and reserved, Bauer nevertheless speaks his mind. As a deputy undersecretary of education during moderate Terrel Bell's reign, he became what Senator Lowell Weicker described as a self-appointed "philosophical enforcer" at the department. As a White House aide, he showed he was not intimidated by the imperious Don Regan. At an issues luncheon with Regan and the president during Bauer's first week, Reagan asked his chief of staff about the furor being created by Jo Ann Gaspar, an HHS official who was refusing to transmit funds appropriated for Planned Parenthood. Regan assured the president that the issue was not really abortion, but Bauer openly contradicted him. As the mouths of Regan's staff members dropped open, Bauer said, "Excuse me, Mr. President, I don't think the chief of staff has the most recent information, and let me see if I can fill you in."

Bauer's audacity stems in part from his intense moral and religious conviction. He was an acolyte of the religious New Right before such a category existed. The only child of blue-collar Democrats, Bauer was raised in Newport, Kentucky, which was known in his youth as "sin city." Prostitutes promenaded down its main street, which was lined by strip shows and gambling joints. Shepherded in the Baptist Church by his grandmother, he took on the cleanup of Newport as his first political issue.

It was also the issue that brought Bauer to the Republican Party. In 1961 he participated in his first political campaign, volunteering in a Republican effort to elect a reform sheriff for Newport. Bauer came to associate the Democrats not with the New Deal or with civil rights, but with vice and immorality. These terms have stuck.

In 1964 he entered Georgetown College, a small Baptist school outside of Lexington, where students were not allowed to drink or dance. Bauer, a Goldwater supporter, joined a group of conservative students who reacted against the protests taking place at other colleges. He was the chairman of Students for Victory in Vietnam and a member of the Young Americans for Freedom. In 1968 he won a partial scholarship to Georgetown University Law School in Washington.

While he was in law school, Bauer worked part time at the Republican National Committee. (He was kept out of the war by high blood pressure.) During the 1972 campaign he assembled unfavorable clippings about Democratic nominee George McGovern for the Nixon campaign. After

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Watergate, he became disillusioned with politics and joined the Direct Marketing Association, lobbying Congress and the White House on behalf of firms like L.L. Bean that sell through the mail.

When Reagan won the nomination in July 1980, Bauer volunteered to be on the staff of Ed Gray, Reagan's former press secretary, who was a deputy director of the Reagan-Bush campaign in Arlington. Gray, who was in charge of clearing any statements that went out in the president's name, was impressed by the young lawyer. "He was a very effective communicator," Gray recalled. When Gray became a member of the Reagan transition team, he took Bauer along.

As a lobbyist, Bauer had been concerned with economic deregulation, but his real interests remained moral and social. At a staff meeting after the election, Bauer told Reagan's domestic adviser Martin Anderson that Reagan had won because of "issues like abortion and tuition tax credits that were responsible for breaking off a lot of Democrats." "Fine, you can have *those* issues," Anderson, a libertarian economist, said. In January Bauer joined Anderson and Gray in the White House Office of Policy Development, where he concentrated on social issues.

After a year in the White House, Bauer moved to the Department of Education as the deputy undersecretary for planning. Undersecretary Gary Jones hired him on Gray's recommendation to serve as a liaison between the moderates in the Department of Education and the conservatives in the Office of Management and Budget, who wanted to eviscerate the Education Department. Bauer represented the Education Department on White House Counsel Ed Meese's Domestic Policy Council, and he testified for the department on Capitol Hill.

But Bauer conceived of his job as bringing the wayward Education Department into line with his New Right version of Reagan conservatism. When Education Secretary Bell and his close associates were campaigning for "excellence in education" and for increased funding in vocational education, Bauer was proclaiming the virtues of school prayer and the voucher system, and denouncing textbooks that downplayed the threat of communism. Bauer demanded that officials under him clear their speeches with his office. In 1984 Bauer told the *New York Times*, "When the message [the career civil servants] get from the political appointees is clear, the real professionals in the department will do their job. But the signals have to be absolutely clear."

Bauer endeared himself to conservatives such as Paul Weyrich, while infuriating department moderates. "He worked for the policies the right wing thought were appropriate. He did not cooperate with people in the department," one former colleague said. Bauer lobbied for William Bennett to succeed Bell as secretary of education, and when Bennett was appointed in January 1985, he nominated Bauer to be his undersecretary. Bennett and Bauer transformed the department into a "bully pulpit" from which they preached moral rectitude.

In February 1986 Ed Meese, who had been impressed with Bauer, appointed him to chair the task force on the family. In January 1987 Donald Regan, beleaguered by the White House scandal and needing conservative support, appointed Bauer to head the Office of Policy Development—a White House department that had been largely ignored since Anderson had resigned in 1982. According to Bauer, Regan told him that he had been impressed when he had seen Bauer on television and that he wanted "OPD to have a more public role than it had previously." Bauer became an assistant to the president and overnight one of the administration's main public figures.

BAUER'S BASIC view of America reflects a kind of Protestant evangelism. He sees America as Newport writ large, suffering from the "erosion of values" that occurred in the heathen '60s. In explaining social ills, he emphasizes the choice between virtue and vice and downplays or ignores the role of nature or inherited economic circumstance. "The spread of AIDS and other infectious diseases," he told a conference in Lexington last spring, has occurred because "we have allowed the erosion of basic values and decency in our society." Poverty, Bauer explains in his report on the family, is often the result of women willfully siring illegitimate children or opting for divorce. "How do we deal with those instances of poverty," Bauer wrote, "of which there are more and more, that result from personal choices?"

Bauer does not like to call himself a fundamentalist. "I don't characterize myself beyond Baptist only because I find these words [like fundamentalist] are loaded with so many meanings," he says. But he shares many of the fundamentalists' views. He is uncomfortable with the Supreme Court's recent ruling that schools cannot require creationism to be taught alongside evolution. Although Bauer thinks that schools should not allow students to make up their own minds about sexual behavior or communism, he believes that students should make up their own minds about evolution. "I don't think you have a [First Amendment] establishment problem where all you are suggesting is that a school ought to present all the theories and let the students decide what it is they want to embrace," he says.

Asked whether he believes in creationism or evolution, Bauer laughs and then pauses, trying to figure out how to frame his answer. "My own opinion is that to the extent [evolution's] adherents eliminate the divine from the concept of man's evolving, I think they are wrong. But I think there are a number of ways portions of evolution can be factually correct and be biblically faithful."

Bauer sympathizes with court suits in Tennessee and Alabama charging that school textbooks impose the religion of secular humanism on their children. The Alabama parents cited not only the omission of religious references in history texts, but excerpts from the *Wizard of Oz* and a home economics text that stated, "People date to have fun." Though Bauer hesitates to endorse the court's ruling on behalf of the parents, he doesn't think Judge Brevard Hand erred in treating secular humanism as a religion. "I think in terms of the court's talk about religion in their establishment cases, secular humanism fits the category."

Bauer is aware of the tension between his own religiosity

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and the political constraints of a public official. His public statements on AIDS have been restrained. Speaking in Indianapolis last April, he said that he believed that the AIDS epidemic confirmed the lessons of the "great religions . . . that promiscuity is wrong." But Bauer has stopped short in his speeches of defining promiscuity.

I asked Bauer whether a person who goes to singles bars and has 20 affairs a year is acting immorally. Bauer, making a sports analogy, asked me if he could use one of his "time-outs" to answer. "I am hesitant as a White House official to be making moral judgments about certain individuals or classes of individuals," he said. His own religious view, he explained, "is that sex outside of marriage is inappropriate."

Bauer is less hesitant about expressing his views of homosexuality. He has fought to keep a gay representative off the White House commission on AIDS. Like Conservative Caucus chair Howard Phillips, Bauer regards homosexuality as an "abomination." "It is, in my mind, a subject upon which society cannot afford to be neutral." I asked him whether he supports the Georgia statute that the Supreme Court ruled to be constitutional. The statute makes oral or anal sex between consenting adults a felony punishable by one to 20 years in jail. "Again distinguishing this is not White House policy, I support states taking that step," Bauer said. "Given the medical information we have about AIDS, it makes even more sense than it did 30 or 40 years ago."

LIKE OTHER New Right conservatives, Bauer is scornful of "country club Republicans who are in the party because of the tax bracket they are in." Bauer has genuine empathy for the kind of working-class family that was common in the Midwest 40 years ago but is now going the way of the American steel and automobile industries. He wants to increase the tax exemption for family dependents to $5,000—a measure that would bankrupt the Treasury but would knock the entire working class off the tax rolls. Bauer is less compassionate, however, toward the working poor and those who live on welfare—many of them victims of industrial decline.

In Bauer's report on the family, he advanced a crude version of Charles Murray's argument in *Losing Ground* that welfare causes poverty. Like Murray, Bauer implies that the American poor might be better off without welfare. "If 'help' merely perpetuates dependency," he writes, "then it is worse than no help at all." To emphasize that welfare and poverty are chosen rather than incurred, Bauer ignores economic circumstance. In trying to explain family instability, he never cites growing unemployment among black males—a trend that, like the growth of single-family heads, dates back to the '50s, before the "erosion of values" or "easy availability of welfare" that Bauer deplores.

Bauer uses specious statistical studies to discredit the welfare system. Charging that welfare causes child poverty, he cites a study showing that "the highest increases in the rate of child poverty in recent years have occurred in those states which pay the highest welfare benefits. The lowest increases—or actual decreases—in child poverty have occurred in states which restrain the level of AFDC payments." But this study by two Ohio State University sociologists overlooked the fact that median income declined or was flat in the ten states where welfare costs and child poverty rose, while income rose substantially in nine of the ten states where welfare payments and poverty showed the least increase. The data showed that economic decline caused an increase in both welfare and child poverty.

Even conservative supporters, such as welfare expert Les Lenkowsky, the president of the Institute for Educational Affairs, distance themselves from Bauer's report. "Clearly, the statements it makes about AFDC go beyond available evidence," Lenkowsky says. "And the policy options are pretty unrealistic."

Bauer certainly has accomplished part of what Don Regan wanted from him. He has cemented New Right loyalties to the president. "Gary has played an important role in maintaining the White House's credibility among conservatives. He helps to shape policy, and he helps the president know how social conservatives are going to look at issues," Michael Schwartz of Weyrich's Free Congress Foundation says. Bauer has also made the Office of Policy Development a major player in White House policy-making. He recently recruited New Right enfant terrible Dinesh d'Souza from the Heritage Foundation and is reportedly on the verge of signing up supply-side economist Bruce Bartlett.

But while Bauer brilliantly represents New Right ideology, his views on American society do not represent either mainstream America or America's libertarian constitutional tradition. Certainly his strictures on sexuality don't speak for those millions of baby boom voters that the administration so successfully wooed in the 1984 election.

He has also been over his head trying to explain the roots of poverty or the causes of AIDS. One can contrast Bauer's qualifications with those of Martin Anderson, who initially headed the Office of Policy Development. Anderson was an established scholar, the author of provocative and well-researched books on urban renewal and welfare, and a former official in the Nixon White House. Bauer's publications before taking office were two articles, one on government deregulation that appeared in a management association magazine in October 1977 and another in the May 1980 *Stars and Stripes*. His main experience was a lobbyist for mail order firms. He has clearly learned a lot during his six years in government, but has he learned enough to advise the president on how to alleviate poverty or how to respond to the worst public health crisis in the country's history?

Bauer's ascendancy is testimony to his own skills. But it also reflects the degree to which the Reagan administration has run aground. It has abandoned any attempt to fashion a constructive economic program, and it is relying on a New Right moralist whose forte is pronouncements rather than policy to shape and represent its domestic agenda. Bauer is a man of verve and intelligence, but one may question whether, given his lack of experience and ideological slant, he should be playing a major role in a presidential administration. □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Without Adele

Fred Astaire
1899-1987
Spaceballs
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)
Wish You Were Here
(Atlantic)

In the spring semester of 1928, when I was 12, I went to high school on West 52nd Street in Manhattan. Twice a day, five days a week, I passed the Alvin Theater, where a musical called *Funny Face* was playing—starring Fred and Adele Astaire. Ten times a week I gazed at the huge, wonderful photos of the Astaires outside the theater, and that was how they were first scored on my mind: as a pair, brother-and-sister stars. Three years later I saw them—the last show in which they were together, the only time I saw him on stage—in a revue called *The Band Wagon*. The cover of the program is framed on my wall, with a photo of the Astaires, Tilly Losch, Frank Morgan, and Helen Broderick in costumes of the *Student Prince* type, all astride a big carousel turtle. Vivid in memory still are the Astaires in the carousel number, "High and Low," and in a sketch by Howard Dietz and George S. Kaufman, "The Pride of the Claghornes." (A Southern colonel, Morgan, discovers that his daughter, Adele, is a virgin and angrily orders her out of the family mansion. Fred played her numbskull brother.)

When that show closed, Adele left the theater to marry, and I thought Fred's career was finished. Even though he had a subsequent Broadway (and London) show on his own, when I first saw him in a film, I thought it was brave of him to carry on alone, to try to make it without Adele. It took some time for me to get him in focus without her, to break him loose from the context in which I had first perceived him, but he and I muddled through the transition together.

Now, in retrospect of that glorious career, there is little left to say about Astaire's dancing as such, and in any case I'm not the one to say it. But I note two related matters. First, not many popular artists are venerated by artists in other branches of their art. I've heard highbrow musicians speak reverently of Duke Ellington. Astaire is another prime example: Balanchine, Robbins, Cunningham were only some of his admirers.

Second, at the risk of sounding niggardly, I point out that no obituary notice of Astaire I've seen has mentioned an important figure in his dancing life. One notice said that he was his own auteur. In the ultimate, inevitable sense, yes: he took everything that was given him and made it his own. But during his entire film and TV career he worked closely with the choreographer Hermes Pan. In a 1972 interview Hal Borne, who was Astaire's arranger and rehearsal pianist for many years, said:

> Hermes was terribly instrumental in everything that Fred did. He was really Fred's alter ego; they were so close through the years. . . . Ginger would come in later and learn the steps. . . . But Hermes and Fred laid out the steps, and Hermes took Ginger's part. . . . I'd watch these guys and they were so good you forgot all about the fact that they were two men dancing together.

I bring up Hermes Pan not to take anything away from Astaire—who could? who would want to?—but to add something: his clarity about himself, his needs. Borne said, "[Hermes'] ideas for choreography were exactly what Fred wanted." To know what it was he wanted and to select the right person to help him get it was, obviously, part of Astaire's genius.

No one has said much about his social effect. In film courses, I've often shown *Funny Face* (only distantly related to the original show), through much of which Astaire wears a red ribbon as a belt. I and the men in the class are always struck by the fact that on Astaire, this ribbon is utterly natural, unflossy, merely a touch of elegance. That elegance, along with the central phenomenon of his dancing, may have made it possible for American men to feel that grace was not a betrayal of male identity.

Like millions, I've often fantasized about dancing like Baryshnikov. I've never fantasized about Astaire. Baryshnikov's art is so remote from dailiness that distance aids self-enchantment; Astaire dances in a relatively real world, which makes it more incredible. Anyone (so to speak) can dance in a castle, but who can dance in a living room? Only Astaire. Nonetheless, for a while I used to dream about just being able to walk down the street like Astaire. Then I realized that you couldn't walk, simply *walk*, the way he did if you couldn't dance the way he does.

Adele, who never returned to the stage after *The Band Wagon*, died in 1981.

Spaceballs. Do we really need more proof that Mel Brooks is running on empty? The last film he did of any merit was *High Anxiety*, in 1978, and that was no smash. Now he has picked up a good idea, taken a long windup, and pitched a sinker.

The title—in itself as funny as *Blazing Saddles*—was promising. It sounded good: Brooks launched into outer space, letting the gas out of the stratosphere. But the script that he and Thomas Meehan and Ronny Graham have come up with is a ten-minute sketch stretched painfully to ten times that length. It begins as a satire on famous space flicks, and soon runs out of wit. E.g., a character is named Ma-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Jean de Florette. Yves Montand and Gérard Depardieu are earthy in Claude Berri's version of Marcel Pagnol's Provençal farm novel. Strong old-fashioned stuff. (Reviewed 7/6/87)

Roxanne. An updated version of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, set in the U.S., that has romance and charm? Steve Martin good as the mod Cyrano? Incredible. But true. (6/29/87)

The Untouchables. Al Capone and Eliot Ness square off once again in Chicago, 1930. Brian De Palma's gory, gorgeous spectacle is a super gangster flick. (6/22/87)

Withnail and I. 1969. Two young, unemployed London actors in a witty, brusque rite of passage, written and directed by Bruce Robinson. (7/13&20/87)

SK

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jor Asshole. Not content with that brilliance, Brooks rings changes on the joke. And, as often as not, when we expect a character to come up with a sharp line, all he says is, "Shit." Too true.

John Candy, the one talent in the nincompoop cast, is anesthetized by a canine outfit he wears. Brooks himself, in two roles, is as shackled by Director Brooks as are all the others.

Wish You Were Here. A fairly bright English comedy-drama written by David Leland, co-author of the strained *Mona Lisa* script, sole writer of the not quite bearable *Personal Services*. His latest is very much better, possibly because he directed it himself—his first such job. The script's basic idea is familiar and the ending is mechanically happy, but there's considerable honesty in the film, along with some humorously rough situations and some brisk dialogue.

A willful, wild adolescent girl is growing up in an English seaside town. The time is 1951, and her wartime childhood is implicated in our very first glimpse of her—in a gas mask. Her wildness makes trouble for her hairdresser father but is exploited by a young swain and by a man of her father's age. Very quickly we are put in the necessary perspective: we see the maddening effect she has on other people, and we see those people as maddening from her point of view. Binding the two views together is the girl's aloof amusement at both.

Leland uses more flashbacks than are necessary, and he leans on lower-middle-class English tackiness in a rerun of the John Osborne-Tony Richardson exaggerations in *The Entertainer*. But he has a keen eye, warm sympathies, and some subtleties in cinematic treatment. All through this film about an adolescent's travail runs a frieze of ancient people: after she bicycles down the boardwalk, an antique man is pushed past in a wheelchair; in the tearoom where she is a waitress, the lady pianist is an elderly peony; under the hood of a stalled motor car, an aged owner works to get it going.

Tom Bell as the girl's dominator then suppliant is grimly, metallically sexy. Heathcote Williams (a playwright too little known) is snappily comic in his one scene as a psychiatrist. The girl herself, Emily Lloyd—16 when the film was made—is perfect: so perceptive, so shaded, so moving, so irresistibly funny she makes us think that she's performing well within her limits, that she can do much more. I hope she does. □

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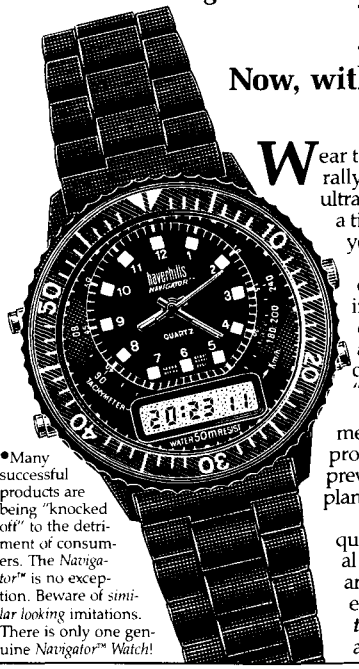

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ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Theater and the Individual Talent

There was a bit of a tempest recently when Actors Equity refused to permit Sarah Brightman to play her original role in Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Phantom of the Opera* and Yvonne Bryceland to recreate her part in Athol Fugard's *Road to Mecca* in the projected Broadway transfers of those plays from London. Equity complained that neither actress was a "star of international stature," the one qualification, apart from actors exchanges, that permits exceptions to the alien rules.

Both cases have now been resolved. Bryceland will perform her original role with no strings attached, and Brightman will be allowed to act on the Broadway stage providing an American actor of equally dim candlepower is invited to appear on the West End. But this old problem remains a continuing source of contention between acting unions on both sides of the Atlantic, a problem with overtones of job insecurity, chauvinism, xenophobia, and—in the case of American Equity members—bleeding egos. Critics and audiences have for so long been comparing our actors invidiously with their English counterparts, particularly in regard to performing the classics, that the actors have grown extremely jealous of the competition and have pressured their union to bar the gates to foreign performers. Under the progressive leadership of Allan Eisenberg, American Equity has been a relatively prudent union in recent years—but it still turns rabid whenever it sees the pants leg of an alien actor.

Such storms no longer disturb the regional theater atmosphere, because Equity, in its contract with LORT (League of Regional Theaters), will allow no foreign actors whatever to perform with nonprofit companies unless they have a "green card" as resident aliens. This union prohibition makes Equity a company casting agent—American citizens, or those in the process of naturalization, only—that would be less oppressive if American actors had more lust for company work. It is a melancholy paradox that most abandon the stage at the first opportunity in their haste to become "stars of international stature" through frequently demeaning work in movies and television, while the great classical roles are proscribed for the English actors who want them. There are, of course, numerous exceptions to this condition—gifted men and women who devote themselves to the underappreciated task of company work. But if you've been wondering why *Hamlet* or *The Master Builder* is not more often performed in non-profit theaters—or why directors are currently taking center stage from actors—it is because a lot of those qualified to play the great parts are either working in movies or waiting by the phone for their agents to summon them to Hollywood for a comedy series.

The Equity prohibition on foreign actors smacks of protectionism, with artists at issue instead of microchips. And although neither the Dramatists Guild nor the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers has thus far made a move to boycott foreign plays or foreign directors, such an action is not inconceivable in the future if defensive labor practice rather than artistic necessity begins to dictate policy. Imagine a theater world in which Americans could no longer stage Beckett or Pinter, where the English would be denied rights to O'Neill, Williams, Miller, Shepard, and Mamet. Imagine Broadway without Stoppard, Frayn, and Shaffer! Would the prohibition extend to Shakespeare and Chekhov, Aeschylus and Pirandello? How long before we dropped the curtain on Pintillie and Strehler, Kantor and Grotowski? Come to think of it, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, having threatened to bar the brilliant Cracow Stary Theater production of *Crime and Punishment* from our shores last summer because it had never heard of Andrzej Wajda, is again harassing the PepsiCo Festival at Purchase with questions regarding the "international stature" of the foreign companies invited. The very phrasing of the question suggests the department is being cued by the unions.

My own belief is that theater, being an international forum, should keep an open door to international artists, applying no restriction whatever on free exchange except the qualification of the artist for the position—this to be determined not by government bureaucracies or labor unions but by the only agencies in a position to make such judgments: the theaters themselves. I am conscious that a theatrical open door policy would prove threatening to a profession riddled with unemployment. But it is perfectly consistent with the American principle of free markets, and, when reciprocated, would offer additional opportunities to American actors in foreign venues. Inviting alien artists to our shores might even have the salutary effect of reviving our own performers' flagging interest in the stage. It would certainly provide role models, singularly missing from our culture, of those who still retain respect for acting.

The single criterion for exchange that strikes me as fundamentally unsound is the one now being used by American and British Equity: that the actor be a "star of international stature." Aside from the subjective nature of the criterion (who determines the quantity of stardust? who anoints the living legend?), this institutionalizes one of the most retrograde and disruptive aspects of theatrical process. Stars are essentially commercial properties: they are measured not by intrinsic merits but by drawing power and box-office appeal, which undermines the very idea of theater. It is true that some excellent actors are also considered stars—Laurence Olivier, Vanessa Redgrave, Albert Finney, Glenda Jackson, Rex Harrison, Peter O'Toole, Meryl Streep, Robert De Niro, Al Pacino, Dustin Hoffman, William Hurt, Christopher Walken, and so forth. But, at least in the last few decades, very few stars have become stellar on the American stage. They shine in media that have mass appeal, the movies and television, and bring that luster with them during their infrequent visits to the stage. British actors are able to traffic freely between films and theater, and, though this is also changing, theater remains the place that brings them their highest honors. But in our country, even Olivier is known more for his commercial movies and Shakespeare films than for his Oedipus or Richard III.

In demanding that foreign performers qualify as "international stars," therefore, Equity helps to subvert one of the cardinal principles of the acting profession, the principle of ensemble. I don't mean to appear impervious to glamour or charisma. Such qualities certainly help to distinguish the actor from the man on the street. But in an ideal theater, every actor would have these qualities and take his or her turn with the others in displaying them to the public in leading roles. Although you'd never know it

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from our system of rewards, or the way our culture singles out individuals for praise, theater is a collective art. It succeeds or fails in the way people interact with each other, in the way they realize their own needs without obscuring the superior needs of the group. No actor can fulfill a role without support from others, which makes the whole apparatus of Tony or Critics Circle awards an absurdity. How does one decide upon a "best actor in a play" or "best actor in a musical" or "best featured actor" or "best" anything at all when each role is so different and no one stands alone on stage except in one-person shows? Would the "best" actor in a particular part be equally good in the part being played by his or her competitor? Comparisons are never more odious than when they are applied to theater artists, for the essence of acting is both its singularity and its interdependence.

That may suggest a reason why the theater is in crisis these days. It is one of the last expressions of communal life. In a society engaged in a scramble for success, and which views life as a ladder with room for only one at the top, how do you preserve an idea of community for those on both sides of the curtain? Actors today are pressured by agents, family, media, and peers—indeed, by the entire society—to reach the top of the ladder by any means they can, though most of them entered the profession with the hope of establishing contact with fellow artists and working toward a common goal. This division—between stardom and artistry, between egoism and selflessness, between vanity and generosity—makes actors among the most tragic figures in our culture, and also among the most emblematic, because they achieve success only by denying everything they believe, while the few who remain on course are full of uncertainty and self-doubt. It is to these heroic few that Equity should be lending encouragement—not by enshrining the hollow idea of stardom but by reviving the idealism in every actor's heart.

I believe that theater will survive in this country precisely because few Americans can contemplate the idea of life without community—but it will need actors, not stars. It will need people who still believe in collective fulfillment, even when theater tickets are sold only by capitalizing on individual achievement. It will need men and women of warm and generous natures, which most actors possess, capable of displaying their selflessness through commitment and dedication rather than one or two benefit performances for worthy causes on non-working nights. It will need artists willing to build a viable alternative to the venal, selfish, mean-spirited world we live in, willing to strengthen our spirits through artistic and moral example.

MICHAEL BENNETT is dead, another victim of the scourge of AIDS. It is an unfortunate loss to the world of musical theater, for he was a remarkable director and choreographer, whose work succeeded precisely because it was not manufactured for success. Bennett was one of a handful in the commercial theater willing to take risks. I was not among those impressed by *Dreamgirls* or *Ballroom*, though I admired Bennett's directorial contributions, but *A Chorus Line* was true gold in everything but the overly sentimental book. And by comparison with the mechanical juggernauts being aimed at us from England, Bennett's productions had a humanity in them all the more endearing for being so rare on our stage. He was a master of his medium and he will be sorely missed.

BREAD AND CIRCUITS

The Soviet Economy: Problems and Prospects
by Padma Desai

(Basil Blackwell, 336 pp., $39.95)

Gorbachev's Challenge: Economic Reform in the Age of High Technology
by Marshall I. Goldman

(Norton, 296 pp., $16.95)

I have a friend who can talk non-stop for several hours about computers without using a single word found in Webster's dictionary. Even verbs and gerunds are transmogrified into technicalese. I can dimly understand him, but only because his highly animated hand and body movements communicate something of the functions and relationships he's describing; and the exercise is exhausting.

We live in a world whose technical complexities and possibilities are advancing faster than our ability to communicate about them. High technologies are shifting the ground on which our economy and our national defenses are built. They are altering relations among nations and tilting the balance of power. Most of us technological illiterates still think in terms of gross national products, numbers of missiles and divisions, and the extent of command over people and natural resources. But the real balance of power is coming to have less to do with these static aggregates than with a less tangible measure: the speed with which a nation's people comprehend and employ the latest technologies. And none has a greater stake in the potential of high technologies to shift the balance of power than three nations of remarkable technological prowess: the United States, the Soviet Union, and Japan. Each, in its own way, has been striving to match or exceed the technological eminence of the others.

I.

THE SOVIET UNION'S successes in this competition among the technological superpowers should not be underestimated. The Soviets were the first to orbit unmanned and manned satellites. The Soviets' successful launch of the first Sputnik in 1957 stimulated America to equal, and eventually to greater, exertions: the Apollo program, the passing of the National Defense Education Act, the creation of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and so on. The Soviets also managed to produce a hydrogen bomb without direct assistance from anyone else. And in the intervening years they have created a broad range of highly sophisticated military weapons.

The Soviets' technological sophistica-

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tion extends to industry as well. They were the first to invent continuous casting equipment for producing steel. They have pioneered new technologies for welding, electroslag remelting, cement making, aluminum casting, the coating of titanium nitrides, and the application of ultrathin diamond films to various materials. They invented the many-lined weaving machine and several advanced consumer products and processes. (They also invented anti-nicotine chewing gum.) And they have shown themselves capable of planning and implementing enormously complex technological projects, often spanning decades—the recently unveiled Energia rocket, for example, which is able to propel heavy loads into space. Beginning next summer the Soviets will use the Energia for unmanned missions to Mars, and they are well on the way to launching orbiting platforms covered with solar cells for converting sunlight into electricity to be beamed back to earth.

ALL THESE technological achievements notwithstanding, the Soviets are behind in many areas. They produce more machine tools than any other nation on earth, but they have failed to incorporate into their production system computerized machine tools, industrial robots, and the computers and communications gear necessary to link them all up. They pump more petroleum and natural gas than anyone else, and they produce more steel, but they haven't yet ventured into either advanced drilling and exploration equipment or new material technologies. They are woefully behind in very-large-scale integrated circuits, supercomputers, biotechnology, personal computers, even copying machines. And the near meltdown at Chernobyl revealed a perilous shortcoming in the safe use of nuclear power.

Most important, the Soviets are losing ground in advanced technologies relative to Japan and the United States. And in terms of the balance of world power, relativity is everything. Two new books reveal the dimensions of this growing Soviet dilemma and explain why it will be so difficult to overcome. In *The Soviet Economy: Problems and Prospects*, Padma Desai, a distinguished econometrician at Columbia University, carefully analyzes Soviet economic growth during the past five years. Through a variety of quantitative techniques, drawing upon data gleaned from CIA reports, she documents the diminishing returns to capital accumulation that characterize the Soviets' declining economic performance. Although the Soviets have continued to maintain an average growth rate in gross national income about equal to that of the United States, the Soviet Union's real product per workhour is now about one-quarter that of Japan and one-fifth that of the United States. It is falling further behind every year. Thus the average Soviet citizen has to work longer and harder just to stay put. The system's capacity to extract huge savings and apply them to new investment is no longer yielding the spectacular growth of decades ago.

Part of the problem is a depletion of natural resources. Energy supplies have become less plentiful and accessible; the remaining stocks of oil and natural gas are at much deeper levels, or in more remote regions. The Soviets are also up against a declining birthrate in European Russia, where most of the nation's industrial capacities are located. But the larger problem, according to Desai, is the Soviet Union's inability to incorporate new technologies into its production system. Capital accumulation can only take the economy so far. Unless the Soviets do a better job utilizing technology, they will fall further behind.

In *Gorbachev's Challenge: Economic Reform in the Age of High Technology*, Marshall I. Goldman, a professor of economics at Wellesley College and associate director of the Russian Research Center at Harvard University, explains why it will be difficult for the Soviets to catch up technologically. Goldman offers a broad and illuminating survey of the intertwined political, bureaucratic, and military institutions that are likely to thwart technological advance. Progress will be resisted not because of a Luddite-like fear of massive job displacement, but rather because of a fear of the political conditions and social consequences of progress.

AS THESE BOOKS make clear, the modern Soviet economy owes much of its structure and philosophical underpinnings to Joseph Stalin's relentless drive toward modernization. Stalin's chief economic aim was to expand heavy industry. To do that, he had to expropriate massive amounts of capital from the agricultural sector and create a highly centralized planning system capable of directing the capital to large projects such as steel mills, railroads, and factories. The objective was to produce high volumes of standardized goods, so that the nation would both enjoy an adequate standard of living and be capable of meeting its military needs without undue dependence on imports. Such forced modernization required centralized direction. Ministries in Moscow set production targets and prices, allocated materials, and determined how the resulting goods were to be distributed.

Desai's detailed calculations demonstrate the extraordinary success of Stalin's economic organization, right up until the mid-1960s. Industrial production boomed. Steel production, for example, grew by about nine percent a year throughout the 1950s. When Nikita Khrushchev visited the United States in 1959, he could credibly boast that—at the rates by which the two economies were growing—the Soviet Union would overtake the United States within 20 years.

But an economy that is planned at the center, and premised upon mass production and heavy industry, is an inflexible economy. It can generate large amounts of identical things, but it cannot shift easily into the production of new goods. Nor can it adjust for quality. As an industrial economy becomes more complex, the number of adjustments needed to ensure that the right things of the right quality are produced at the correct time in the right place rises logarithmically. Prices that are allowed to rise and fall with changes in supply and demand automatically signal to everyone how to make these sorts of adjustments. But central planning sends no such helpful instructions. Instead, planners drown in paperwork, and everybody else just drowns. Goldman estimates that Gosplan, the central bureaucracy responsible for most of the planning and allocation, handles about seven million documents and makes 83 million calculations each year. The State Price Committee sets 200,000 prices annually.

Even Khrushchev understood the limitations of central planning. In 1957, in an attempt to decentralize some of these adjustment decisions, he abolished most of the industrial ministries at the center. Many of the displaced Moscow bureaucrats migrated to the regional councils, or *sovnarkhozy*, that were to take over from the center. But those who remained kept tight rein, and they never fully allowed the reforms to take effect. After Khrushchev's ouster in 1965, Alexei Kosygin restored much of the central bureaucracy. Not until almost two decades later did a Soviet leader again attempt

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decentralization, by which time the inefficiencies of central planning had taken a severe toll on the Soviet economy.

One of Khrushchev's reforms had a more lasting influence. In an attempt to spur productivity, he gave certain enterprise managers a bit more discretion over the assortment, the styles, and the prices of the goods their plants produced. The continued resistance of Moscow bureaucrats notwithstanding, this reform took root; by 1970 it was extended to all firms.

Still, as Goldman relates, Soviet planners have always resisted change. History has recorded few bureaucracies more entrenched than the bureaucracy that plans the Soviet economy. The *nomenklatura* comprises about 400,000 people, most of them in Moscow. Their livelihood and status depend on maintaining strict control over allocation and pricing decisions. They are conservative by belief and by instinct. Their deep-seated reluctance to experiment with economic reforms is shared by many other Soviet citizens: by minor bureaucrats in the 15 republics and the 159 regions of the republics, by military officers, by Party officials, and by average workers, all of whom think they have little to gain and a great deal to lose by change, and many of whom have experienced the disruptions and the inconveniences brought on by previous efforts to alter the system.

II.

ENTER Mikhail Gorbachev. No other Soviet leader has been able to assume such extensive control of both the Party and the government in so short a time. Within one year of his election as Party general secretary, Gorbachev had removed almost half of the directors of ministries and state commissions and had altered the same proportion of top leaders in the Central Committee departments. He had removed Party chiefs in one-quarter of the republics and almost one-third of first secretaries in the 159 regions of the republics, and had shifted the membership of the Central Committee in his direction. He has moved with equal speed in filling all these vacancies with people supportive of his reforms.

Can Gorbachev reform the system? More important, what does "reform" mean to Gorbachev? He is too wily a politician and bureaucratic infighter to define "reform" so radically that it cannot be accomplished. Desai and Goldman are in essential agreement on what he seeks, and the events of the last few months appear to confirm their view. First, he wants to reduce the size of Moscow's top planning bureaucracy, thus cutting back the number of power centers with a vested interest in maintaining economic controls. In recent weeks, he has announced his intention to halve the 50,000-employee staff of Gosplan and to cut the number of Moscow ministries from 80 to 20. Planning ministries would no longer have day-to-day responsibilities for prices and output. They would focus more of their efforts on planning new technologies, promoting foreign trade, and training personnel.

Second, Gorbachev would give enterprise managers somewhat more control over prices and output targets, and more responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of plans. They would retain a share of the profits and use it for salaries or enterprise improvements. Unproductive enterprises would be shut down and unneeded workers laid off. In addition, managers would be elected by workers. Third, Gorbachev wants to consolidate enterprises within larger, vertically integrated associations, thus enabling suppliers and their industrial customers to adjust to one another's needs directly, without too many external plans and directives. And fourth, he wants a relaxation of tensions with the West, so that more resources can be freed from military requirements and shifted to new investment, and so that the Soviet Union can obtain credits, consumer goods, and technology from the United States and its allies.

Right now a debate is raging in the Soviet Union about whether these reforms go too far or not far enough. Last February, for example, Gorbachev unveiled his plans for reducing the size of the planning ministries, for giving enterprise managers more discretion, and for democratizing the workplace. Several weeks ago, the proposed Law on State Enterprise was approved by the Central Committee and the Supreme Soviet. But the details have yet to be worked out, and many planners and Party officials are skeptical. Two top officials who have been Gorbachev loyalists in the past—Politburo member Nikolai I. Ryzhkov, who heads the Council of Ministers, and Gosplan chief Nikolay V. Talyzin—recently spoke out against the bureaucratic cuts.

But in May *Novy Mir* carried an article

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by Soviet economist Larisa Popkova, who argued that the proposed law didn't go far enough. She called for the total elimination of central controls: "It's either plan or market, either directive or competition. Where there is socialism, there is no place for markets and liberal spirit, and, I repeat, it cannot be." And in the June issue, Nikolai Shmelyov, another prominent Soviet economist, proposed that subsidies and price-setting be abolished, central planning be eliminated, the ruble be devalued to its real price in world money markets, and that the nation accept some unemployment as a natural byproduct of a free market economy. Shmelyov concluded that Gorbachev's proposal was inadequate: "We are again dooming ourselves to halfhearted measures. And halfheartedness, as we all know, is often worse than inactivity." Abel Aganbegian, who now heads the economics department at the Soviet Academy of Sciences, responded to these criticisms by arguing that the economy could be revived by keeping some of the central planning system intact, but tempering it with "economic incentives" (including prices set by consumer demand rather than government fiat), competition, and small-scale private enterprise.

The very fact of this debate—so much of it in public, within official publications—is remarkable. The Soviet Union is now openly arguing about the merits of capitalism. The debate illustrates the fifth plank in Gorbachev's reform strategy: getting the broader Soviet public involved in such deliberations, and thus gaining their support for whatever economic reform emerges.

GORBACHEV the politician is likely to prevail over Gorbachev the economist. He is too cunning to push the bureaucracy too far too fast. Thus the reforms that are actually put into effect during the next few years will, in all likelihood, be more modest than those many Soviet economists are now advocating. Initially Gorbachev said that he was committed to "a profound transformation of the economy." At last year's Party congress, he characterized his economic program as one of "radical reform." But since then his language has been more moderate. He has talked only of "perfecting the economic mechanism," and has gone out of his way to stress that his proposals signal no major change with the past. In May he was even quoted as telling a group of automobile workers of "the enormous advantages of a centrally planned economy." As if to reassure the bureaucrats, he added that "we will even have to strengthen the principle of centralization, where necessary." A few weeks ago, after the Central Committee approved Gorbachev's proposals, he warned that the changes would entail a difficult period of transition. Gorbachev the politician hopes that his administrative reforms will push both enterprise managers and central planners toward greater productivity.

But here's the rub: improvements in productivity, in the form of greater quantities of goods, aren't enough to rescue the Soviet economy. These days an ever-increasing proportion of the value of consumer products and military equipment alike derives from the application of advanced technologies. This trend is apparent in all advanced industrial nations. The world's leading economies are shifting out of jobs traditionally associated with heavy industries (such as steel making, large-batch chemical production, and assembly) toward jobs that require the manipulation and application of knowledge (making and marketing high-strength ceramics, new alloys, specialty chemicals, computers, and integrated circuits). These new products fulfill many of the same functions as the old, but with far greater efficiency and flexibility and thus at far lower cost. Most important, these new products, and the services related to them, continually change as technologies evolve.

At best, the reforms that Gorbachev is seeking will render the Soviet economy administratively more efficient. This is no small feat. Stories are recounted of new milk plants installed in areas where there are few cows, petrochemical plants where no oil pipelines reach. But Gorbachev's reforms will not fundamentally alter the incentives operating on workers and managers. In all likelihood, poor quality will continue to haunt the production system. Every Soviet manager and worker knows how easy it is to measure, and thus to be rewarded for, quantity—and how difficult it is to measure, and to be disciplined for, poor quality. Gorbachev hopes to reverse this by administrative fiat. He has announced a new bureaucracy, the State Acceptance Service, charged with quality control. But as long as the old incentives remain in place, there is no reason to suppose that quality will show much improvement.

A bigger problem is that a centrally planned economy, even one that allows local administrative discretion, creates no incentives to innovate. Every Soviet manager and worker is aware of the risk that an innovation might slow the flow of products and thus reduce the year's bonus, while a successful innovation is unlikely to have any effect other than to increase next year's production quota. The result, not surprisingly, is that Soviet enterprises are extraordinarily reluctant to try something new. Not even the proposed Law on State Enterprise will affect these incentives very much.

The Soviet Union is not without occasionally dramatic technological breakthroughs, but these typically occur in laboratories far removed from the workplace. Some of these new inventions eventually find their way into enterprise plans, financed by a central Fund for the Development of Science and Technology. But by the time bureaucrats in Moscow discover that a new invention might be useful and then decide precisely where it should go, years may have passed. None of Gorbachev's reforms will speed the pace of technology transfer from the laboratory to the factory.

THERE IS a still more fundamental barrier to technological innovation in the Soviet Union. Technological innovation can thrive only in an environment that invites, or at least tolerates, dissent. Technological innovation is largely a process of imagining radical alternatives to what is currently accepted and sharing these new possibilities with others. Problems must be openly recognized and ferment must be generated among creative minds to find solutions. But these are, in effect, acts of subversion. They almost invariably stir things up. And no clear boundaries exist between different categories of imagination, between different realms of subversion. The scientific, the managerial, the economic, the philosophical, the cultural, the political: they have a way of running into each other. It is no accident, as the Marxists used to say, that many of the Soviet Union's most brilliant scientists and artists are also political dissidents.

Moreover, many of the new technologies are themselves subversive. Computers, word processors, and telecommunications equipment not only incite unorthodox ideas, they also allow them to be exchanged instantly. They inspire communities of dissent. Totalitarian regimes understand this; they monopolize the technologies of communication—the

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press, radio and television, telephones, and now the computer. Nothing threatens a police state's legitimacy more than private and robust debate; nothing assures its survival more than the isolation and fragmentation of the citizenry.

According to Goldman, these ironies lie at the core of Gorbachev's dilemma. For more than a half century, the Soviet police state has maintained tight control over communications among Soviet citizens. Even today, senior scholars and scientists are loath to use copying machines: in most enterprises and universities, copying departments are staffed by the KGB. How, then, can the Soviet Union be expected to adapt technologies that will unleash so much communication? How could the Soviets embellish and improve upon the new technologies without simultaneously inviting political and social dissent? To gain technological sophistication, Soviet economics and politics would have to be transformed. This the Soviet bureaucracy will not allow. Technological sophistication is essential to the Soviet Union's economic and political survival. Technological backwardness is essential to the Soviet Union's system of government.

III.

NOT SINCE STALIN forced the Soviet Union into becoming an industrial state has any nation sought economic development with as much determination—and achieved it with as much success—as Japan. Many people can remember a time, not so many years ago, when "Made in Japan" was synonymous with cheap, shoddy workmanship. (During the 1950s, American regulators filed charges against a toy manufacturer from the Japanese town of Usa whose products bore the label "Made in Usa.") During the past 25 years, however, Japan has concentrated almost exclusively on improving productivity and shifting production to more advanced goods. Rather than trying to preserve its industrial base, Japan has sought to propel it into the future, at the same time casting off older industries in which Japan's competitive position was declining.

Japan is now outpacing the United States in advanced technologies. For example, most of the world's memory chips—the fingernail-sized circuits that drive just about every electronic gadget you can name—are made in Japan, which is also their largest market. Japanese companies are on their way to dominating world production of gallium-arsenide computer chips (capable of processing data much faster than conventional silicon chips), a product on which the technology of President Reagan's Star Wars is particularly dependent. The innards of supercomputers increasingly come from Japan as well.

Japan's rising dominance of advanced technologies is coming to affect America's national defenses. Most primary defense contractors working on advanced weapons systems for the Pentagon are American firms, but to an ever-greater extent their subcontractors supplying the most advanced electronic components are Japanese. About 40 percent, by value, of the advanced electronics finding their way into American weapons systems are now coming from Japan. A recent National Security Council report concludes on a particularly apocalyptic note: "If the United States becomes a net importer [of advanced microelectronics] and a technically inferior producer, it would also become a less independent, less influential, and less secure nation."

Thus the Soviet Union is not the only superpower now falling behind technologically. For Gorbachev, the technological challenge potentially implies a fundamental transformation in the Soviet economic and political system. What does the technological challenge imply for America?

There are interesting parallels. Both the Soviet and the American military bureaucracies are the major users of advanced technologies in their respective economies. Both initiate and sponsor vast programs of research and development. Over 35 percent of all the research undertaken by the "private" sector in the United States is financed by government, and 80 percent of this sum derives from the Pentagon. Two-thirds of all basic research in America—without direct commercial applications—is funded by government, the bulk of it by the Pentagon. Indeed, the Pentagon's new concern about America's technological dependence on Japan is spawning ever more high-tech research.

Neither the American nor the Soviet military bureaucracy worries much about ensuring competition among suppliers.

RETURNING NATIVE

What can you say about Pennsylvania
in regard to New England except that
it is slightly less cold, and less rocky,
or rather that the rocks are different?
Redder, and gritty, and piled up here and there,
whether as glacial moraine or collapsed springhouse
is not easy to tell, so quickly
are human efforts bundled back into nature.

In fall, the trees turn yellower—
hard maple, hickory, and oak
melt into tulip poplar, black walnut,
and locust. The woods are overgrown
with wild-grape vines, and with greenbrier
spreading its low net of anxious small claws.
In warm November, the mulching forest floor
smells like a rotting animal.

A genial pulpiness, in short: the sky
is soft with haze and paper-gray
even while the sun shines, and the rain
falls soft on the shoulders of farmers
while the children keep on playing,
their heads of hair beaded like spider webs.
A deep-dyed blur softens the bleak cities
whose people palaver in prolonged vowels.

There is a secret here, some death-defying joke
the eyes, the red knuckles, the bellies imply—
a suet of consolation fetched straight
from the slaughterhouse and hung out
for chickadees to peck in the lee of the spruce,
where the husks of sunflower seeds
and the peace-signs of bird feet crowd
the snow that barely masks the still-green grass.

I knew that secret once, and have forgotten.
The death-defying secret—it rises
up toward me like a dog's gaze, loving
but bewildered. When winter sits cold and black
on Boston's granite hills, in Philadelphia,
slumped between its two polluted rivers,
warmth's shadow leans low into the wall
and gets the cement to deliver a kiss.

JOHN UPDIKE

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Last year almost two-thirds of the dollar volume of Pentagon contracts was awarded without competitive bidding. And both the Soviet and the American militaries tend to summon their nations' best scientific and engineering talent to work on large and complex weapons systems, which may be of little use to the rest of the economy. Last year, six out of ten of America's top engineering graduates went to work on Pentagon projects.

The Pentagon is also America's largest purchaser of high technology. The means by which the Pentagon decides what technology it wants to buy and then goes about obtaining it bear remarkable similarities to the nightmarish planning and allocation system centered in Moscow. According to a recent study by the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, each year the Pentagon undertakes 15 million separate contracts, overseen in the first instance by 150,000 acquisition officers. On top of them are nearly 25,000 auditors and inspectors. The Pentagon floats on a veritable sea of paper. Procurement regulations themselves total 30,000 pages, and are issued by 79 different offices. The direct cost of monitoring all this flow of paper is approximately $10 billion annually.

Secrecy is an important aspect of high-technology development within both bureaucracies. A 1985 executive order makes it relatively easy for the Pentagon to classify documents without considering the public's right to know. In awarding research contracts, Pentagon officials routinely insist that they have the right to review university-based research before the results are published in scientific journals, and on several occasions they have pulled scientific papers from academic conferences. Some of America's most modern factories, outfitted by the Pentagon with computer-integrated manufacturing systems—such as LTV's Vought plant, which produces the B-1 bomber—are now shrouded in Pentagon secrecy. No commercial entrepreneurs are allowed in to see how to do it.

THERE ARE other parallels. Like the Soviet Union, the United States continues to excel at technological breakthroughs but finds it difficult to move them quickly from lab to factory. In recent years Americans invented integrated circuits, videocassette recorders, microwave ovens, computerized machine tools, robots, and a host of other gadgets, all of which were subsequently transformed by the Japanese into outstanding products. Unlike Japan and the Soviet Union, we are blessed with an army of technological entrepreneurs, concocting extraordinary inventions in their basements and attics. But a significant percentage of their inventions never make it into production on our shores. American manufacturers haven't been particularly interested in new technology. Having succeeded so well for over 50 years in large-batch and mass production, American manufacturers haven't wanted—or understood the need—to shift to more knowledge-intensive forms of production.

Of course the technological parallels between the Soviets and us should not be overstated. American productivity continues to be the highest in the world—far higher than Soviet productivity, still higher than Japanese productivity. But both the Soviet Union and the United States are slipping badly in the global technology race. The reason is simple. Success depends not on big discoveries, but on a widely diffused, continuous, and incremental drive toward application and refinement.

GOLDMAN believes that the speed of such technological application and refinement depends on how "free" a nation's markets are from central planning. But that is only a part of the truth. Technology development in all three nations—the Soviet Union, the United States, and Japan—is, to a large extent, planned. It must be. Private enterprises, which depend on profits for their continued survival, are rarely in a position to experiment with radically different ways of doing things. The risks are too great; the costs of shifting over the production system are too high. At best, these enterprises will wait until some other company tries out the new technologies. But such caution will badly hobble the pace of technology development overall. Thus every industrialized government is in the business of technology planning, development, and transfer. The critical question is not whether such planning occurs, but how it is carried out.

In the United States, the tasks of technology development and transfer have been consigned largely to the Pentagon, which, not unlike the Soviet system of central planning, is a bureaucracy, with a bureaucracy's rigidities and concealments. In Japan, by contrast, technology development and transfer entail a close partnership between profit-driven enterprises and a range of quasi-independent agencies halfway between public and private sectors. The notorious Ministry of International Trade and Industry is more coordinator than planner: it establishes joint research ventures among private firms and convenes endless councils and conferences of engineers and managers to parcel out risks and responsibilities more efficiently. Of equal importance are financial institutions, like the Japanese Development Bank, that provide low-interest loans to enterprises seeking to experiment with new production technologies. And then there is the array of institutes and semi-official laboratories that comb the world for new inventions and, after licensing them, organize groups of Japanese firms to find ways of utilizing them.

Of the three planning systems, Japan's is by far the most successful at transferring new technologies into the production system. It is the least bureaucratic and secretive, the most flexible. Consider, for example, the latest rage in high technology, superconductive alloys capable of transmitting electricity with virtually no loss of energy. If all the hoopla can be believed, these wondrous materials promise to revolutionize both goods and weapons. They are still in the labs, but they will find their way into production within the next few years. Which nation will take the lead? In Japan, superconductive applications are now being pursued in dozens of institutes and joint research ventures, involving every major industry group and hundreds of smaller businesses and subcontractors. In the United States, by contrast, superconductive applications are being pursued within only three major institutions—IBM, AT&T, and the Office of the Strategic Defense Initiative in the Department of Defense—and most of the funding is coming from the Pentagon. Nobody knows exactly what the Soviets are now doing about superconductivity, but it's a fair bet that the central ministries and the military bureaucracies are in charge. We will have to wait for years to discover which of these three nations will prevail, but the odds strongly favor Japan.

IF DARWINISM could explain the evolution of political economies—such that the most successful economic organizations predominate until more adaptive, and thus more successful, ones come along—we might be able to predict the direction in which Gorbachev's re-

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forms will eventually lead. We could make the same prediction about America's response to Gorbachev's reforms, indeed about the evolution of the American political economy itself. The prediction is that Japan will amass so much power that the United States and the Soviet Union will have no choice but to copy its decentralized, open planning system. The politics and the economics of the three superpowers would converge in a kind of managed, democratic capitalism.

But political economies don't follow Darwin's rules. Pesky things like culture, values, and beliefs intrude. It is here, perhaps, that Japan enjoys its most important advantage, for its political culture, institutions, and public values all tend toward the rapid utilization of new knowledge. By contrast, the military-encrusted bureaucracies of the Soviet Union and the United States tend toward the preservation of the economic status quo. As Gorbachev proceeds with his strategy, and the United States responds, only one prediction seems reasonably safe. Increasingly, and in highly subtle ways, changes in these nations' relative technological prowess will lead to changes in the balance of world power, and thus in the strategies employed by both the Soviet Union and the United States toward one another. But both nations' strategies will be affected by their technological prowess relative to Japan's. And more and more, the balance of power, at least as it is determined by technology, will tilt toward Japan.

ROBERT B. REICH

JEAN-OF-ALL-TRADES

Past Tense
The Cocteau Diaries, Volume One
by Jean Cocteau
translated by Richard Howard

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 376 pp., $19.95)

"Mauriac knows the manhunt of which I am the victim. He wanted to be in at the kill. Léonard tells me about the cold feet in our cities; even Lyons, where Gantillon is on my side. Brussels goes along but is afraid of Antwerp, etc. Except for Germany, foreign countries and our provinces don't have the same recovery speed as Paris."

What's this? A coded message from a double agent, back in 1941? A Common Market attempt to fix the price of socks? The annual consignment of high words and outrage over the route plan for the Tour de France bicycle race? A terrifying plot to send the whole of Western Europe into orbit?

Worse. The time is February 1952. Jean-Louis Barrault and Madeleine Renaud, setting out on tour from Paris with their theater company, have decided not to take Jean Cocteau's new play, *Bacchus*. For Cocteau it will mean early, arbitrary shutting down of a successful run: "*Bacchus* earned 600,000 francs last night," he had noted in January. Any author would be furious. Cocteau becomes unintelligible. One of the surprises of this volume of his diaries (there will be others) is the discovery that when strong feeling overtakes a prolific poet, words fail him.

"I had to leave Paris as fast as possible," he writes, a few weeks later. "My nervous system was losing its organization." Trying to explain to himself what he sees in a painting by his protégé, Edouard Dermit, he loses his way:

> His soul, the beauty of his soul, passes into the scruple and the patience of his work without his even perceiving it. . . . In the presence of an astonishing canvas like this one, which represents the garage of Santo Sospir, one understands that Dermit has thought only of its objective quality. The subjective has created itself on its own.

Satire? Parody? Most certainly not. As revealed by these jottings, Cocteau takes his opinions, his thoughts, and—to his everlasting credit—his friends seriously. When Picasso asks him what Dermit's work is like, Cocteau answers, "It's painting that's revolutionary in relation to you." There is no record of Picasso's next question. (On another occasion, Cocteau compares Dermit to Vermeer.) Musing over the death of Eva Perón, he decides that he knows "another modern saint," the banking heiress Francine Weisweiller:

> I believe that there is no human being alive so perfect as Francine Weisweiller, except Edouard Dermit, who is altogether beyond reproach. His total purity, his spiritual substance are incredible. My only glory in this world will be to have deserved the friendship of these two supernatural beings.

Not all his goslings became swans, or even divinities, but he displayed on their behalf the same touchy and defensive loyalty that his admirers, today, feel bound to show toward him. How much of that thunder of praise would he have accepted as justified, one wonders, reading Ned Rorem's introduction and Richard Howard's postface? All, perhaps; all and its opposite, for Cocteau was too purebred an artist not to doubt. He could write, "I believe that each of my works is capable of making the reputation of a single writer," and, after reading a critique of his own books, "The parallel between Spinoza's work and mine is astonishing," and "My intelligence terrifies me." Touring the islands of Greece in Mme Weisweiller's yacht, he observes, "The frescoes I made for Francine are as beautiful as Knossos." But also, "There is a height I cannot reach, a high note that is not in my range. . . . You must make up your mind to acknowledge your limits." And, sadly, "The older I get, the more I realize that I am not read. My fame consists of rumors. . . . Even those who read me remember nothing."

The personal diaries of the elderly and celebrated are not always of sustained interest. Celebrity is an isolating factor, limiting the writer to a tight circle of friends he can trust; it does little to broaden the preoccupations of old age—health, the sorting out of old grudges—other than adding the special responsibility of maintaining his reputation, a monument the diarist examines for unfriendly graffiti and cracks. Everything unexpected has been done; even if he goes on writing or painting or putting plays on the stage, the only important verdict left is final, the only uncertainty how the sentence will be carried out.

For the reader, the mystery of the creative gift behind the career—a conundrum of genesis, will, memory, imagination, and drive—remains unsolved. The clue lies somewhere in the only interesting stretch of an artist's life—the beginning, initiation. If his later, private life

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has been relentlessly made public, and if his elderly design for living repeats in fainter lineaments a well-known pattern, there is not much to be discovered. Nor is there anything new left for him to say. He can snap back at detractors across 30 years, as Cocteau does to André Gide, or whittle away at a more important writer, as he does to Proust, or measure applause, that glorious central heating for a late season. Journals are often registers of low moods and of moments of anger and discouragement. No one ever seems to reach for a notebook in order to scribble, "The best possible thing has just happened." Even bearing this in mind, one cannot escape the feeling that Cocteau has set down the thoughts and reflections of a disappointed man.

Cocteau began to keep a daily record in the summer of 1951, when he was 62, celebrated abroad and adored at home. (The present volume stops at the end of 1952.) His name was attached to virtually every important artistic movement of the half century, just as some remark of his, some bit of thistledown, some weightless paradox floated through so many memoirs of the age. His position as someone who had tried just about everything, and had made most tries work, seemed at anchor. Nevertheless, he saw himself as belittled and rejected by critics, and he believed that his work would not survive: "I shall be—all my life and after my death—misrepresented, insulted, calumniated, dragged through the mire."

He has been dead for 24 years now, and there is scarcely a week when he is not mentioned and quoted in a preface, in a critical essay, in an interview. "As Cocteau once said . . ." is followed by a shower of sparks that delight the mind and quit the memory. Poems are reissued, love letters are published, actors speak his lines. But even when he was alive to hear himself quoted and to see his own films and to accept new commissions, dissent was taken for abuse, and he ferried his grievances from friend to friend. (Be glad when they still insult you, Matisse tells him. He had not been disparaged for 30 years, and rather missed it.)

Cocteau did not want consolation; he wanted his complaints nourished and sustained. His imagination supplied a

(PHOTO BY BERENICE ABBOTT)

besieging host of ill-wishers, "my enemies," as unrelenting and shadowy as the "enemies" of the Psalms. In fact, he was one of those public figures who emerged from the arts, a vogue become custom, an avant-garde structure softened by time into a familiar landmark, loved by the French, but not necessarily by French critics. Anyone who lived in the South of France in the early 1950s will recall the affectionate applause that now and then greeted his appearance in a restaurant or at a concert. His life, the life on view (and, God knows, he did everything to keep it there), seemed to answer Freud's requirements, love and work, and could match, item for item, some of Jung's components of happiness—health, money, the ability to enjoy art and nature. In short, an easy glide through a storybook world.

To a Cocteau, enjoyment was like a looking glass. He was a distiller of art in so many different fields and forms that it seems simpler to say what he did not do: he did not train as a dancer, or compose serious works of music, but he inspired and encouraged others who did. He insisted on having all his creations called poetry, whether he meant a play or a volume of essays—a harmless conceit that leaves him with a foot caught in the start of the 20th century. He had once exercised a remarkable talent—some say his greatest—for bringing together gifted persons who set each other's imaginations alight. It was an aptitude that required charm, time, ruthless artistic snobbery—as well as a large dose of the other kind—and a divinatory feeling for the taste of the future. It also needed generosity; no one has ever faulted Cocteau on that.

That special kind of ability has fallen low in favor, probably because meetings now are expected to produce immediate and practical results. Cocteau was 18 years younger than Proust; his youth overlapped the middle decades of a generation that took for granted the slow fusion of "social" and "art." The decline of the social element, in that shape at least, may account for the dismissive "*touche-à-tout*" (jack-of-all-trades) applied to Cocteau, sometimes, today. A mistaken idea about time and its uses leads to suspicion: he was endlessly productive, yet seemed to be doing nothing—at most, playing. Leisure, except within set limits, bought and paid for, suggests privilege and decay. (Curiously,

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the power privilege afforded by raw money does not offend—no more in France than in the rest of the Western world.)

COCTEAU CAME out of a leisurely Paris background, though not an idyllic one: his father committed suicide when Cocteau was ten, returning to haunt his son's opium-laden dreams in the form of a parrot. His Paris was a slower, easier city where, as Elizabeth Bowen said about pre-war London, there seemed plenty of everything—"time, money, and taxis." Memoirs and biographies of the period allow a commanding view over poets and artists who always seem to have something new to say and who call on one another, tirelessly, all day and all night, talking, talking. That is how people remember the past; everyone always had more time for serious thinking 30 years ago. If we consider Cocteau, in and out of paralyzing bouts of despondency, in and out of religious faith, taking opium and cocaine for deliverance, we can wonder if all the time in the world means more than having a longer reach to accommodate anxiety.

In Paris, at any rate, genius no longer drops in on genius. Meetings are hedged by financial and taxation reminders, small enclosures of universal gloom. Lashings of pre-war food and wine wouldn't help: genius, on a diet, sips mineral water and wishes the other genius were a TV producer instead of a poet on the make. In his later years Cocteau may have been drawn into more pointless encounters than his early career had prepared him for. On April 2, 1952, he describes a lunch with Georges Simenon and Marcel Pagnol and their wives. The women, we gather, say nothing worth repeating. The men talk about money and fame. Simenon announces that they are the only three (he does not say three what) "to whom America would offer what they ask. Try as I might, I can't think of any others." Cocteau replies that his own finances are in bad shape. (Another entry suggests he is paying 80 percent income tax on his earnings.) One of the trio reveals that Picasso had been offered, in America, "a bridge of gold," a fabulous sum of money, and has turned it down. One would like to know more about the solid-gold bridge and even more about the rejection, but Cocteau leaves it at that, without a smile.

The bleached humorlessness of the diaries is another surprise. When the publisher Bernard Grasset suggests that Cocteau take a two-week trip "to the Kremlin" and write a personal profile of Stalin, "*Stalin Intime*," he does not find the thought camp or comedy; he objects only that Grasset does not realize "the countless impossibilities such a project contains." No trace remains of the old, dragonfly Cocteau, light and quick, whose easy irony so irritated Gide. In his 60s, Cocteau sounds as remote from laughter and, worse, as carping and discontented as Gide himself.

What darkened him? Was it the fear of ill health? French hypochondria is more of a household pet than a state of mind. In 1952 Cocteau imagines he is feeling poorly because of British atomic testing in Australia. His constitution still resisted a battering of work and engagements, undertaken without enthusiasm, attended by strain and fretting, that might have cut down a much younger man. "Submerged by letters, visits, telephone calls," he compares celebrity to Mexican torture, being smeared with honey and eaten by ants. He could not live in his Paris flat: as soon as word of his arrival spread, the telephone rang from early morning and strangers sat outside on the staircase. "Everybody wants something," even Jean Paul Sartre. The trouble was that Cocteau could not say no. He said yes—to Sartre, to *Vogue*, to something called "The Friends of Charlie Chaplin," to the organizers of a show of children's paintings, to the BBC. And all this dispersion of time and vitality had only one aim: to fill his mind and his waking hours. He speaks of "a thousand little tasks which do not fill up the void. . . . Without work the void is there."

Of course, he worked: on a Sunday he "did the models, sets, and costumes for *Bacchus*" and the first of a set of lithographs for a new book. "I dare not go back to painting," he writes in September 1951—presumably because he has too much else to do. He writes a film commentary and dictates a chapter for still another book. A few days later he works "all night and all Sunday on the self-portrait," and five days later it is finished. In the chinks of time between he sees Picasso and confides that he still hopes to be "discovered."

HE HAD by now arranged his domestic affairs in a triangular pattern that suited him, with Edouard Dermit ("Doudou"), 36 years his junior, whom he considered an adoptive son, and Francine Weisweiller, whose southern villa Santo Sospir had become his base and home. In his postface Howard speaks of an "extraordinary psychodrama" and a "domestication of the sublime," and of Cocteau's "accommodating his life to myth." Domestication of the sublime is too depressing to think about, and only adolescents can accommodate life to myth. It is impossible for a reader to identify Cocteau with Oedipus, or any archetypal figure—not unless we are to take seriously his calling Doudou and Francine "supernatural beings." In that case, an extra footnote might be helpful.

Actually, we may be in the presence of something simpler and sadder than the prolongation of a myth: a spinning out of childhood. Often the three appear to inhabit a nursery world, with hostile pirate forces outside Santo Sospir kept at bay, and Nanny just about to come in to carry the children off to baths and early supper. Mme Weisweiller's husband and small children hover around the edge of the diaries, brought on for a Christmas party and vanishing again. An emptiness at the heart of her real family, Cocteau explains, had caused her to create this other, make-believe kinship group. (At the time, she was the object of a certain amount of malice, inspired by envy of her wealth and, probably, the belief that she had paid her way into a star turn. One weekly magazine, under the famous photograph of Cocteau and Picasso at a bullfight, surrounded by friends, singled her out as "the young woman craning her neck for fear of being left out of the picture.")

COCTEAU WRITES that the people he felt closest to, "the two men who have had the greatest influence on me," with whom he felt "at ease . . . at home," were Picasso and Stravinsky. Yet he seldom saw Picasso, whose question about Dermit's work makes it sound as if he never came to Santo Sospir; and when Cocteau started work on a new production of *Oedipus Rex* in 1952, he had not seen Stravinsky in 14 years. Once, in the span covered by the diaries, he sees Jean Genet again. It was a disastrous encounter. Genet offered wounding truths and a few unkind opinions (for the past 20 years, he said, Cocteau had been nothing but a public figure, an actor) that Cocteau countered in his diary, later, alone. He still had not solved the artist's dilemma, people or work: "My need for a den and my depression at being in a den. Contacts alarm me, and the absence of contacts demoralizes me. No idea where I am in all this."

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Cocteau was born the same year as Charlie Chaplin, T. S. Eliot, and, for that matter, Adolf Hitler. His centenary in 1989 will be jostled by the bicentenary celebration of the French Revolution, which threatens to sweep everything else into a corner. Still, it will be surprising if he does not enjoy a strong revival. It will be a test of his own summing-up: "For forty years now I've managed to survive on a name, on legends, without anything solid to sustain them," and, "My name has outstripped my work. Now my work must catch up with it."

He died in 1963. According to the Encyclopaedia Universalis, he was then "an old man covered with honors" who had been little more than "a meddler in the arts." Middle-of-the-road appraisers, such as Harold Acton, see him as a chameleon, imbued with "sham audacity," a masterly popularizer, but a creator in his own right too. Ned Rorem goes further in the other direction than anyone has dared, and nominates Cocteau "the most important artist of our time." Who is runner-up?

MAVIS GALLANT

Mavis Gallant is a critic and writer living in Paris. Her most recent book is a collection of stories, *Overhead in a Balloon* (Random House).

BEFORE THE FALWELL

Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America by Patricia U. Bonomi

(Oxford University Press, 304 pp., $24.95)

Does America need religion? Embedded in that explosive question are at least two controversies: the first is a case presently being fought in the courts; the second is a long-standing historiographic dispute.

The immediate controversy is raging between Christian fundamentalists and secular humanists over state textbook policies. In the constitutional battle, Christian fundamentalists contend that secular humanism is itself a religion being foisted on students in violation of the separation of church and state. Secularist scholars reply that all knowledge must be put to the test of reason and science, to the test of evidence. By that criterion, of course, many modern isms, (Marxism, Freudianism, pacifism, and feminism, to name a few) would have to be abolished from the teaching curriculum as unverifiable hypotheses. The irony is compounded when one considers that in some ways the study of history itself is less about truth than about opinion—what people believe rather than what they know. Thus, even by "modernist" standards, the curriculum of American history would have to contain a huge amount of religion, simply because millions of people once held religious beliefs.

Yet this does not seem to be the case with textbooks used in many public school systems. Apparently the authors of the texts still labor in the shadow of the old Progressive school of history that emphasized, under the influence of Frederick Jackson Turner and Charles Beard, the effect of material factors such as the frontier and property and diminished the importance of ideas, political or religious. Even Vernon L. Parrington, who did focus on ideas, regarded religion (especially New England Calvinism) as an impediment to reason, tolerance, and progress. Parrington influenced generations of historians to interpret America as the triumph of liberalism and secular values over conservatism and religious dogma. But it was a constricting interpretation, for it slighted the liberal (and perhaps even radical) role that religion played not only in the abolition of slavery and in the Social Gospel movement of the Progressive era, but in the American Revolution itself.

Patricia Bonomi's timely and thoughtful book comes as a necessary corrective to the Parringtonian view of American history, and to that of other historiographic schools as well. Several historians of religion, even the great Perry Miller, who imbibed the tensions of Cal-

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vinism like an addict, tended to see Puritanism as one long story of decline and defeat. Bonomi challenges the "declension" thesis in a systematic investigation of Puritan New England, as well as of the Quaker, German Reformed Lutheran, and Anglican denominations of the Middle and Southern colonies. She notes that various sects experienced much conflict and many strains during the process of resettlement in the New World. The first settlers had to contend with hunger, disease, and Indian wars; and in the struggle for material survival spiritual salvation became secondary. Still, what impresses Bonomi is the extent to which the various denominations adapted to the new conditions and reshaped their respective doctrines to fit colonial realities.

An interesting example of such an adaptation is the fate of the idea of toleration in the colonial world. The religious impulse aspired to mutual love founded in community, but the immigrant population was too diverse to achieve homogeneity by subduing dissent. Catholic Maryland resisted the idea of religious liberty, but Protestant Rhode Island granted it to Catholics, Jews, and "Turks." (Jacob R. Marcus pointed this out in *The Colonial American Jew, 1492-1776*.) Many Pennsylvania Quakers agreed with Rhode Island's Roger Williams that "forced worship stinks in God's nostrils," that extending freedom of conscience was the best way of preserving peace. Virginia had little hope of imposing religious uniformity due to the unruliness of its inhabitants, and to the precarious status of the Anglican Church in the tobacco colony. In Puritan Massachusetts, religious leniency was slow to develop, and came about only after a century of generational conflicts and doctrinal fissures. Except for Rhode Island and Pennsylvania, Bonomi writes, the acceptance of toleration was "more opportunistic than ideological, more a case of helpless acquiescence than an endorsement of the principle of religious freedom."

HOW TO EXECUTE AN AGENCY

by E. Waterhouse Allen

Wicked, informed satire about Bureaucratic Types you should recognize! Distilled from 50 years work in human service agencies. 1st edit., $3.95.

BARK-BACK
P.O. Box 235, Glenshaw, PA 15116.

Bonomi rescues the colonial clergy from the "hostile" commentaries of contemporaries who complained again and again of its shortcomings. She asks us to understand the many problems the clergy faced: uncertain salaries and tenure, an inadequate supply of ministers, dispersed congregations, and an emergent individualism among the populace. Church members had a love-hate relationship with their leaders; they wanted their blessings and encouragement, not their authority and chastisement. Yet ministers struggled to overcome such obstacles by making effective use of the sermon; by reaching out to blacks, Indians, and indentured servants; and by establishing, especially in New England and Virginia, institutions of higher learning devoted to "Enlightenment humanism." Bonomi observes that Washington and Madison believed that church attendance promoted public virtue and social order, that Jefferson regarded the ethics of Jesus as the "most sublime ever preached to man," that John Adams drew upon 18th-century rationalism in rejecting the Calvinist doctrine of predestination.

THE GROWING compatibility of reason and religion led to one of several unique features of the American Revolution. In America in 1776, in contrast to France in 1789, the churches sided with the rebels. Many Protestant leaders regarded resistance to tyranny as obedience to God. Bonomi traces this development to the Great Awakening of the 1740s, a tumultuous movement that split apart many churches, whose members began to prize individual values over hierarchical authority. Hence the long-held principle of sovereignty as indivisible and irresistible was challenged in the orbit of religion many years before it was debated in the orbit of politics. As a result, revivalist and rationalist clergymen alike became supporters of the Revolution.

Bonomi perceptively shows how religion penetrated political thought and reinforced the conviction that all public authority had to be subjected to the scrutiny and control of the people. But she is less convincing when she implies that theories of consent and resistance came primarily from classical and Whig sources, especially from Gordon and Trenchard's *Cato's Letters*. Far more influential was John Locke—the liberal theoretician of the right of revolution, Jonathan Edwards's favorite philosopher, and the most frequently cited British author among the American clergy.

Bonomi's chapter on "The Formation of Religious Culture" deals imaginatively with the social implications of America's religious practice, and the latitudinarianism that came to characterize the voluntaristic nature of postcolonial church life. She remarks upon the ways in which religion became part of such civil services as weddings and graduations, upon the growing acceptance of pluralism and diversity, and upon the influence of religion on the temperance, suffrage, and abolitionist movements. This, again, was a far cry from Europe, where religion had been associated with traditional values. Thus Bonomi concludes with Tocqueville's observation: "There is no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America."

Tocqueville, however, was a Catholic; he was not quite prepared to endorse the role of religion in America as simply a convenient social institution that had more to do with utility than with truth. "In the very midst of the zeal," he wrote of Americans, "one generally sees something so quiet, so methodical, so calculated that it would seem that the head rather than the heart leads them to the foot of the altar. . . . Not only do Americans practice their religion out of self-interest, but they often even place in this world the interest which they have in practicing it." Tocqueville sensed a problem that would later be developed by Weber and Durkheim: the possibility that the "formation" of a religious culture risked obliterating the distinction between the sacred and the profane, and thereby confusing spiritual yearning and practical endeavor.

These troubling matters make one wish that Bonomi had acknowledged the loss of religion's hold over many American intellectuals in the 19th century—a species not necessarily essential to the social historian, to be sure, but certainly vital to the perpetuation of religion as a theological and philosophical proposition. Leading thinkers such as Emerson and Thoreau concluded that formal religion resulted in conformity, superficiality, and a "corpse-cold" indifference and intolerance. They sought God elsewhere, in nature.

WHERE DOES ALL this leave the contemporary war between the Christian fundamentalists and the secular humanists? One side invokes scripture, the other science. "Seek, and ye

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shall find" could apply to both religion and science, providing the pursuit of truth is accorded more value than the mere claim of it. The open-minded Benjamin Franklin had room for both science and religion in his utilitarian outlook. "If men are so wicked with religion," he cautioned the atheist Tom Paine, "what would they be if without it?"

Still, it should be remembered that those who wrote the Constitution rarely relied upon the old truths of the Bible. They preferred instead the "new science of politics." Even John Adams, the one Founder who never hesitated to invoke the Calvinist idea of original sin, emphatically denied that religion, or any system of belief that appealed to the efficacy of conscience, could be counted upon to sustain republican government; and the authors of *The Federalist* likened political factions to Protestant sects, because they saw religion as divisive rather than cohesive. Abraham Lincoln was the first president to try to bring religion back into political discourse, for the purpose of making America aware of the sin of slavery. In today's political culture, sin is not within America but within "the evil empire." Indeed, in recent years religion has become what the Founders feared, and what Niebuhr warned against: an expression of pride and self-idolatry.

JOHN PATRICK DIGGINS

John Patrick Diggins is professor of history at the University of California, Irvine. His book on the 1940s and '50s, *The Proud Decades*, will be published by W. W. Norton in 1988.

A CLOCKWORK APPLE

Ambient
by Jack Womack

(Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 259 pp., $15.95)

Jack Womack's cinematic first novel, *Ambient*, is one of a remarkable number of pessimistic futurist novels to appear in recent years. These novels—called anti-utopian or dystopian—trace their lineage to the once-flourishing utopian novel; but they portray a future in which every imaginable gloomy prophesy has come to pass. The dystopian novel drags up the often unspoken worries of a generation; it makes explicit the fears that remain in the background in conventional fiction.

Among the better-known writers who have taken up the dystopian novel recently are Margaret Atwood, Paul Theroux, and Don DeLillo; but the form has also attracted younger writers, such as Womack, Denis Johnson, and Paul Auster. Many of these novelists have demonstrated their discontent with modern life before, but that they do so now with a univocality and in a common genre marks a distinctive literary phenomenon.

The dystopian novel has effloresced once before in this century. The first surge was spurred by three influential works: Eugene Zamiatin's *We* (1924), Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1931), and George Orwell's *1984* (1949). Then, as now, the dystopian novel drew its horrors from topical events and worries. Those writers shared the same foreboding: the fear of a perfected and universalized totalitarianism, in the face of which all three novels defend individual freedom—political, artistic, even the freedom to destroy.

The current generation of dystopian writers also bases its nightmares on present preoccupations, but its worries couldn't be more different from those that obsessed Zamiatin, Huxley, and Orwell. Instead of the specter of mass conformity, of the destruction of individual liberty by the overorganized society, the new generation suffers from a nightmare of the anarchic state, of a society in which social disintegration threatens the security of the individual. In the new dystopian novel, far from monitoring thought and developing ideal gene pools, the government can barely patrol the streets.

The literary bridge between the old and the new visions of dystopia is *A Clockwork Orange*. Anthony Burgess's lesson is traditional and liberal: free will is our essence. To tamper with it—whatever the benefit to society—is to destroy what is human in us. The state is wrong to brainwash the vicious teenage hoodlum Alec, even though its goal—to make him good—is a worthy one. Better to permit a murderer to return to the streets than allow the state to constrain his ability to choose between good and evil.

Burgess's fear of a too-powerful state fits comfortably with the concerns of the older generation of dystopians. But younger writers who admired the book—or Stanley Kubrick's powerful, simplified movie—were fascinated less by its moral issues than by its Hobbesian social backdrop. And it is this view of a society in eclipse—of ordinary citizens resigned to a crime-filled world, of a police unable to control its violent citizenry even with methods equally violent—that has become the point of departure for the new generation.

Jack Womack depends on his literary and cinematic predecessors. *Ambient*'s world is deliberately reminiscent of *A Clockwork Orange*. The setting is 21st-century New York City, where any hope of social order ended long ago with the great Long Island nuclear disaster. Burgess's Alec might have spoken the callous lines with which the book opens:

> Jimmy loved Fifth Avenue, the safest route downtown. We rode a castrolite, twenty-three long, eight across, quite maneuverable when the squeeze drew. . . . Armor lined the car frame. A wire skirt ran beneath; no mollies could be rolled under by any seeking sport. The electroshield buzzed at button's press, frying miscreants wishing to lodge grievances.

Violence is universal, killing routine. New York has broken down into those business and luxury zones the government can still defend and the primitive tenement neighborhoods in which people band together for protection. Since the mildest exchange may lead to a shoot-out, phalanxes of bodyguards surround the rich.

The killing ethos extends to business as well. Mergers are now resolved through deadly combat at "conferences" ("The aim of a conference was to destabilize all members of the opposition"), and the losing CEO suffers ritual execution. Business itself is dominated by a handful of vast conglomerates. The most successful is Dryco, founded by a bizarre, reclusive, Howard Hughes type and run by his unstable son, Mister Dryden.

The narrator is O'Malley, Mister Dryden's bodyguard. He is the classic recorder of the dystopian novel: the faithful

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foot soldier who begins to doubt. Basically good, though inarticulate, he realizes that things are getting out of control. Frustrated love has always been the wild card of evil societies, driving unremarkable citizens to rebellion. O'Malley loves Mister Dryden's concubine, Avalon, a black-leathered, Grace Jones look-alike. But as Mister Dryden's official companion, she can only long for O'Malley. O'Malley's discontent is augmented by the worsening behavior of the Drydens. His boss is lost in a world of paranoia and "reckers" (recreational drugs, a Dryco monopoly), while Mister Dryden's father grows further enraptured by the mysteries of the C. of E.—the Church of Elvis. O'Malley and Avalon resolve to take action, hatching a plot that leads them through a Harlem guarded by army rockets to the Dryden's estate on the garrisoned Saw Mill Parkway, and thence to the hidden secret of Dryco's power.

GEORGE ORWELL made language a primary concern of the dystopian novel. In *1984* the government controlled language to control thought. *A Clockwork Orange* stood the process on its head. With the '60s youth movement as an example, Burgess created Nadsat, a slang teenagers spoke to keep out the official adult world. Womack follows Burgess's lead, depicting languages that represent more the government's failure to preserve standard English than any attempt to invent one. Mister Dryden speaks "bizspeak," a crisp, flat, modern executive vocabulary, full of nouns turned into action verbs. "Bookstore me," he demands before a trip to Scribner's.

At the opposite end linguistically and politically are the ambients. Originally the mutant descendants of the Long Island nuclear disaster, these enemies of the regime now include converts who have voluntarily crippled themselves in solidarity. Ambients believe Armageddon is near and eagerly await the end: "Ambients rejoiced that these were the last days, wished and prayed that . . . an end might be delivered to the world that ran raw around them." They are a potent, ungovernable, nebulous political force, and their growing numbers lead to hope for the eventual overthrow of the plutocracy. Ambients speak a lilting, Elizabethan English, full of shimmering, other-worldly poeticisms. "My blood beats your heart allafter, everafter, till time's lovely end" is how O'Malley's sister, a convert, wishes him goodbye.

Ambient is more typical than innovative, but it shows well how the dystopian novel continues to absorb the general and specific worries of our time. The Reagan years have of course had an important effect on the form, though it would be too simple to trace the current deluge to an administration whose policies generally rub writers the wrong way. Whatever the cause, business and the abuses of the corpocracy figure prominently in new dystopian books and movies. The dystopian CEO is the perverse flip side of the glorified executives of so many recent business biographies and autobiographies. He is similarly sexy, powerful, and dramatic, but he is also utterly evil.

Moreover, the dystopia of old had no money. Centrally controlled, class was determined by government planners. But the new fiction is obsessed with the widening gap between rich and poor, between the corporate types and the havenots. In Paul Theroux's *O-Zone*, yuppies reside in high-security towers in Manhattan, while the poor live in squalid huts across the rivers. Paul Auster's *In the Country of Last Things* depicts an official class of shopping-cart-pushing bag ladies, whose reclaiming of trash provides the city with fuel. And with the split between rich and poor comes far more violence than Burgess imagined in his once-shocking novel. As O'Malley says in *Ambient*: "There was no excuse for being poor in America, it was much easier to be dead."

OF COURSE it is possible to take the resurgence of dystopian fiction and the concerns with our society it purportedly demonstrates too seriously. *Ambient* seems to have been written with movie deals very much in mind: visions of commercial successes such as *A Clockwork Orange* and *Blade Runner* may well have played through Womack's head. And dystopian novels are easy novels. Glib invention replaces character development; there are generally stretches of writing that shouldn't ordinarily pass muster. A destroyed Manhattan full of machine guns and grenades makes a great backdrop—as in, for instance, *Escape from New York*—and the special effects opportunity presented by deformed ambients is obvious.

In keeping with the genre, *Ambient* plays off facile shocks of recognition. Remember Charlton Heston in the final scene of *Planet of the Apes* realizing he has been on Earth all along? In the same vein, halfway through Atwood's *A Handmaid's Tale* one realizes that the government is hanging the bodies of traitors in Harvard Yard. Burgess names streets in his future London after his favorite authors—Priestley Place, Kingsley Avenue—conferring a bit of fictional immortality. And Womack builds in his shivery echoes too. "I Love Lucy" and "Leave It To Beaver" still play on 21st-century television, and *McCall's* two centuries from now runs a cover article on "Forty Things To Do With Macaroni." If nothing else, the dystopian novel is a good way to get even.

DANIEL MAX

Daniel Max is an editor in New York City.

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 4*

firms and corporate headquarters." I bet he's wrong. Events such as war change people. In more peaceful and stable times you won't find people running around looking for a devastated society to mend. But that does not mean that, if we had another war with similar devastation, Americans wouldn't respond.

THOMAS M. KEANE JR.
Washington, D.C.

BEHIND SINYAVSKY

To the editors:

After the publication of "What Yevgeny Knew" (June 22), I spoke with Andrei Sinyavsky and his wife, Maria Vasilevna. Sinyavsky thought that my article implied that he might have corroborated with the Soviet secret police to recruit his friend, the French student. I am certain that he had not, in fact, helped the authorities. I think he behaved with honor and courage at all times.

I did not mention that manuscripts of the works by Sinyavsky and his collaborator, Yuli Daniel, were shown to them by the KGB during pretrial interrogations. These manuscripts were recognized as being among those sent to the West. From this Mme Sinyavsky concludes that someone in the West did help to compromise Sinyavsky and Daniel. I omitted this only because I had to stop somewhere in exploring various explanations of how they could have been identified to the KGB.

DAVID JAMESON
Great Falls, Virginia

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Honor

I KNEW A HERO ONCE, many years ago. His name was Tuvia Bielsky. I was a boy, but the magnitude of his deeds made itself known even in my muddled little world. Bielsky was the head of Bielsky's Brigade, one of the largest Jewish partisan groups in Hitler's abattoir. When I was old enough for history, I learned some of the facts: that he operated in the Byelorussian forests from 1941 to 1944; that he and his brothers, a miller's sons, commanded more than a thousand Jewish men, women, and children (read: more than a thousand Jewish heads were held high as millions of Jewish heads rolled); that he ambushed the murderers, and destroyed their installations, and blew up the bridges that would have led them to more innocent blood, and punished their collaborators.

ALL THIS, as I say, I learned later. As a boy I knew only that the beefy, reticent, smiling man in the bungalow near ours was a Maccabee. We were in Swan Lake, New York, summering in a corner of the Catskills. During the week, when the men were away at work, the colony was a little sleepy; the women knitted beneath the trees and talked, the children fished by the lake and had fantasies. I saw the hero of the Jews only on weekends. After sundown on Friday, or before, if the Sabbath figured in your plans, the big cars with the fins started pulling in, full of food and fatigue, the nine-to-fivers inside looking for refreshment from the stinking city, and bringing it, too. There followed, before these tireless men returned to their livelihood a hundred miles away, 48 hours of swimming, gin rummy, pingpong, well-meant but poorly played softball, Richard Tucker and Shelley Fabares, trips to the vegetable farm and to the swish hotels at the bend in the road along the lake, to Evansky's for a haircut and to Itzkowitz's for peaches and plums—and all of it in a mixture of Polish, Yiddish, and English that was the perfect measure of the adjustments that an incomprehensible God had forced upon these grown-ups only a few years before.

I SUMMERED, as I wintered, among the scarred. The white wooden bungalows lined in bright colors were inhabited by people who have since been officially designated by the culture of their haven as "survivors." Bielsky, and my parents, were among them. These were most of the adults I ever met. Of course I could not really understand just how adult their adulthood was. Still, nothing really was hidden. There was sorrow beneath the Empire State sun. I detected it in the heavily accented conversation around me, and in its silences. The sighing never stopped. Almost before you knew your neighbor's name, you knew where he came from; and it was almost never a place to which he could return. There were times when the Catskills may as well have been the Carpathians.

I DO NOT MEAN to suggest that we were not what my mother likes to call "normal." It was in the gaps between the good times that memory did its work. There was summer's mischief. I recall that Micky Bielsky was responsible for a lot of it, too. I wanted the hero's son for a friend, but he frightened me; he had a gruff voice and a grabbing manner—the traces in the son, no doubt, of qualities by which the father had ruled the woods near Novogrudok. There was a word the grown-ups used to describe their enjoyments: *a mechaye*, they would say. A dip in the pool was *a mechaye*! A perfectly cooked hamburger was *a mechaye*! A night's entertainment at one of the hotels was *a mechaye*! In school I discovered that this was not merely the ordinary Yiddish term of praise for an object of pleasure. It was also the Hebrew term for a bringing back to life—the very verb with which the tradition refers to the resurrection of the dead. So I would watch these people splash themselves, and take cool drinks, and dance, and I would hear them say: a resurrection! Pleasure had rather a lot on its plate, in the Catskills.

IN ISRAEL they refer to the events of 1939-45 as *ha-shoah v'ha-gvurah*, "the holocaust and the resistance." They have the order right, at least; but still they're pushing it. The truth is that there was a lot more *shoah* than *gvurah*, a lot more holocaust than resistance. That was why the sight and the sound of Bielsky mattered so much. He was not exactly a "survivor." It was not merely luck that had kept him among the living. He had taken his own fate back. He had liberated himself, and others, from a malevolent law of his people's history. He died last month in Brooklyn, in his 80s. My memory of him will always be attached to my understanding of honor.

"CHURCH AFFIRMS VALIDITY of Judaism," said a hilarious headline in the *Times* a few weeks ago, referring to a statement by the United Church of Christ. There is something disgraceful about the delight of certain Jews in the condescension of certain Christians. ("Synagogue Affirms Validity of Christianity": now that would be news, but nobody's asking.) And it has been quite a season for Christian condescension. The Presbyterians, too, have been wondering how much ontology to confer upon the old Israel. In Biloxi, at the 199th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the fifth-largest Protestant denomination in the United States, a paper called "A Theological Understanding of the Relationship Between Christians and Jews" was adopted. "When speaking with Jews about matters of faith," these Christians reminded themselves, "we must always acknowledge that Jews are already in a covenantal relationship with God." Thank you very much.

THE RICHEST BIT came in the form of a protest by the Rev. Benjamin Weir, until recently the leader of the denomination. He protested loudly that he would find it "very difficult to live with" the paper's affirmation of "God's promise of land to the people Israel." Such an affirmation, he insisted, was "political," that is, it amounted to a recognition of Israel. He demanded revisions, but was given only an official unwillingness to take a position on "the theological significance of the state of Israel." Ecumenical Jews exulted in his defeat. The Rev. Weir, you will recall, was a hostage in Lebanon. And in the Tower Commission report, the holy book of Washington, it is established that he was released when Israel delivered 500 TOW missiles and 18 Hawk missiles to Iran. So the state that doesn't exist saved the man's life. Weir can keep his approval. I would be ashamed to have it.

L. W.

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